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WSIS+20 FORUM
HIGH-LEVEL EVENT 2024

27-31 May 2024
Geneva, Switzerland

OUTCOME DOCUMENT

INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATION UNION

WSIS+20 FORUM HIGH-LEVEL EVENT 2024

OUTCOME DOCUMENT
(as of 12 August 2024)

WSIS+20 FORUM
HIGH-LEVEL EVENT 2024

DISCLAIMER

Please note the WSIS+20 Forum High-Level Event 2024 Outcome Document is a compilation of the outcomes of the sessions (interactive sessions, partner insights, Action Line Facilitation Meetings, High-Level Dialogues, and many more) submitted to the WSIS secretariat by the organizations responsible for their respective sessions. ITU does not hold any responsibility for the outcomes provided by the organizers of the sessions for the WSIS+20 Forum High-Level Event 2024.

WSIS+20 FORUM
HIGH-LEVEL EVENT 2024
OUTCOME DOCUMENT

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WSIS+20 FORUM HIGH-LEVEL EVENT 2024: INTRODUCTION

Two decades ago, the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) set the framework for global digital cooperation during the two phases of the Summit – in Geneva in 2003 and Tunis in 2005 – with a vision to build people-centric, inclusive, and development-oriented information and knowledge societies. In today's rapidly evolving digital landscape, WSIS continues to hold unique potential to propel transformative action to the benefit of all.

Ahead of the United Nations General Assembly's (UNGA) twenty-year review of WSIS, the WSIS+20 Forum High-Level Event served as a platform for multistakeholder exchanges and a catalyst for action, taking stock of achievements, key trends, and challenges since the 2003 Geneva Plan of Action. It was a unique occasion for the international community to assess opportunities for global digital cooperation and join forces towards a forward-looking and reinvigorated shared vision, informing the UN Summit of the Future.

The WSIS+20 Forum High-Level Event 2024 was held from **27 to 31 May** in Geneva, Switzerland, and brought together experts, policymakers, and diverse stakeholders from around the world to discuss information and communication technologies (ICTs) for sustainable development. The WSIS+20 Forum High-Level Event 2024 welcomed over **4,000 participants** attending both on-site and remotely, from 160 countries worldwide. The Forum gathered more than **500 high-level representatives** of the wider WSIS stakeholder community, including Ministers and Deputies, Regulators, Ambassadors; and leaders from the private sector, academia and civil society. The five-day high-level event's sessions took place from Monday to Wednesday at the International Conference Centre Geneva (CICG), and on Thursday and Friday, the sessions hosted at the ITU Headquarters.

This year's Forum had several innovative session formats and featured around **200 sessions**, including interactive sessions, WSIS Action Lines Facilitation Meetings, knowledge cafes, WSIS Prizes, Leaders TalkX sessions, and many more.

The WSIS+20 Forum High-Level Event 2024 Chair was **H.E. Mr. Albert Rösti, Federal Councillor, Federal Department of the Environment, Transport, Energy and Communications (DETEC), Switzerland (Confederation of)**. During the closing ceremony, the Chair presented the Chair's summary, which summarised the discussions that took place during the five-day Event.

OPEN CONSULTATION PROCESS

The agenda and programme of the WSIS+20 Forum High-Level Event 2024 were designed in collaboration with the multi-stakeholders on the basis of official submissions received during the Open Consultation Process on the thematic aspects and innovations of the format of the Event. Engaging all WSIS stakeholders (International Organizations, civil society, academia, technical community, private sector, and goverment), this process aims to ensure active participation across sectors in forming the agenda and the program of the WSIS Forum, highlighting linkages between the WSIS Action Lines and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The OCP for the WSIS+20 Forum High-Level Event 2024 began in October 2023 with consultative meetings organized to collect inputs to share the program of the event.

The ITU-WSIS Secretariat received around 200 submissions containing proposals on the thematic aspects and innovations on the format of the WSIS+20 Forum High-Level Event 2024, including binding requests for sessions, exhibition spaces, partnerships, and so on. All related information can be found at: https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Home/Consultations.

Stakeholder Type distribution

15% — Academia / Technical Community

21% — Civil Society

26% — Governments

23% — International Organizations

14% — Private Sector

1% — Other
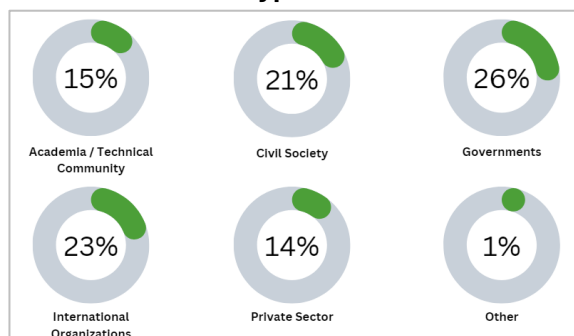
Regional distribution of contributions

Western Europe 35%

Africa 20%

Asia and Australasia 23%

Eastern Europe and Northern Asia 6%

The Americas 16%
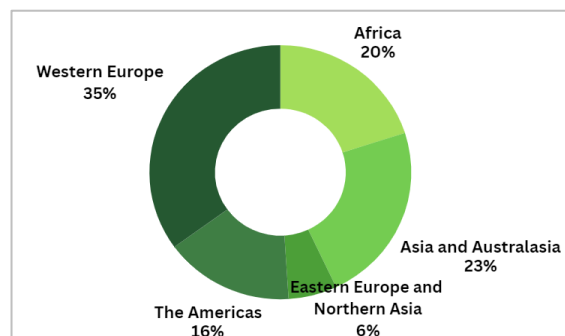
It is important to note that about half of submissions from Western Europe came from the headquarters of organizations with an international presence.

PARTICIPATION AT THE WSIS+20 FORUM HIGH-LEVEL EVENT 2024

The Event gathered over 4,000 participants onsite and online, including nearly 80 ministers, deputies, and heads of regulatory authorities. With representation from 160 countries, the Event featured more than 500 high-level participants engaging in around 200 sessions with over 100 speakers.

SOCIAL MEDIA AT THE WSIS+20 FORUM HIGH-LEVEL EVENT 2024

Metrics
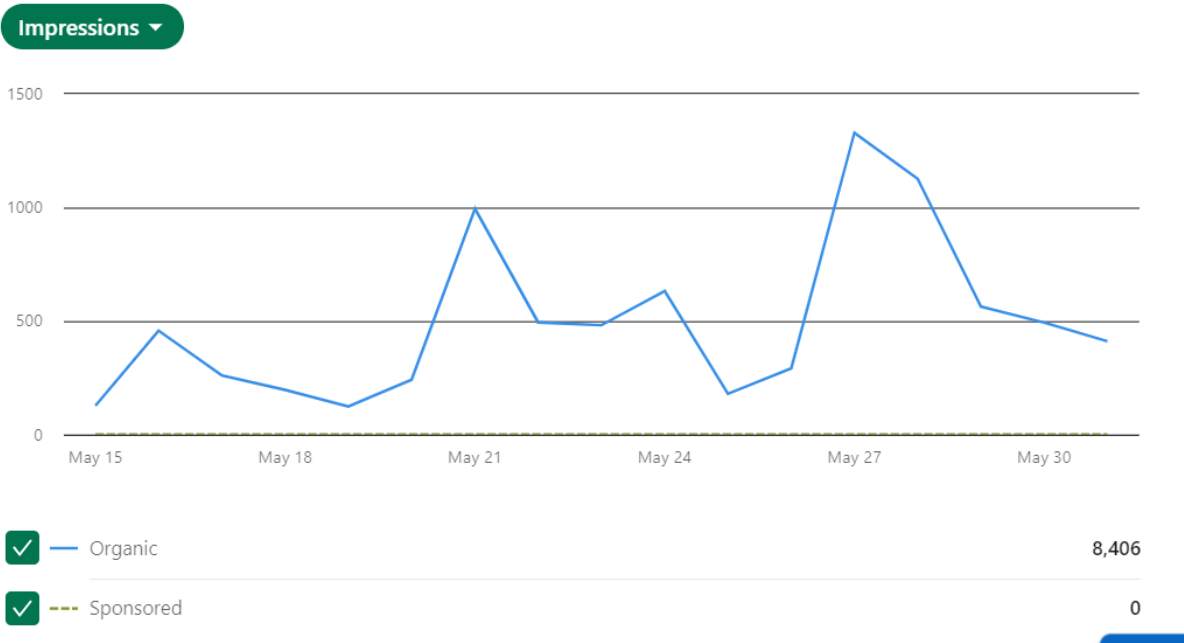
LinkedIn stats:

→ Impressions on LinkedIn posts in the last 2 weeks of May.
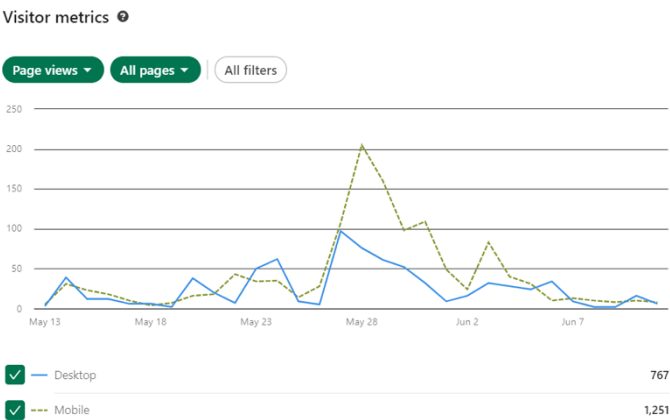
→ Number of single visitors who reached our account and the device they used.

Follower demographics ❓

Location ▾

Geneva Metropolitan Area, Switzerland · 237 (9.3%)

Greater Paris Metropolitan Region, France · 54 (2.1%)

New York City Metropolitan Area · 52 (2%)

London Area, United Kingdom, United Kingdom · 47 (1.8%)

Greater Delhi Area, India · 40 (1.6%)

Washington DC-Baltimore Area · 35 (1.4%)

Nairobi County, Kenya · 30 (1.2%)

Cairo, Egypt · 28 (1.1%)

Grand Tunis Metropolitan Area, Tunisia · 27 (1.1%)

Dakar, Senegal · 24 (< 1%)

→ Europe region and Americas first on LinkedIn

Follower demographics ❓

(Industry ▾)

Telecommunications · 300 (11.8%)

Higher Education · 186 (7.3%)

Government Administration · 170 (6.7%)

IT Services and IT Consulting · 157 (6.2%)

International Affairs · 150 (5.9%)

Non-profit Organizations · 143 (5.6%)

Software Development · 89 (3.5%)

Research Services · 82 (3.2%)

Civic and Social Organizations · 78 (3.1%)

Technology, Information and Internet · 59 (2.3%)

Facebook stats:

Audience
10,813 Facebook followers

Age and Gender
■ Men   **66.70%**
■ Women **33.30%**

Instagram stats:

→ Posts are the type of content that reaches the most audience. You should make this format your first choice.

By content type

| All | Followers | Non-followers |

Posts	786
Reels	582
Stories	331
Live	46
Videos	1

● Followers ● Non–followers
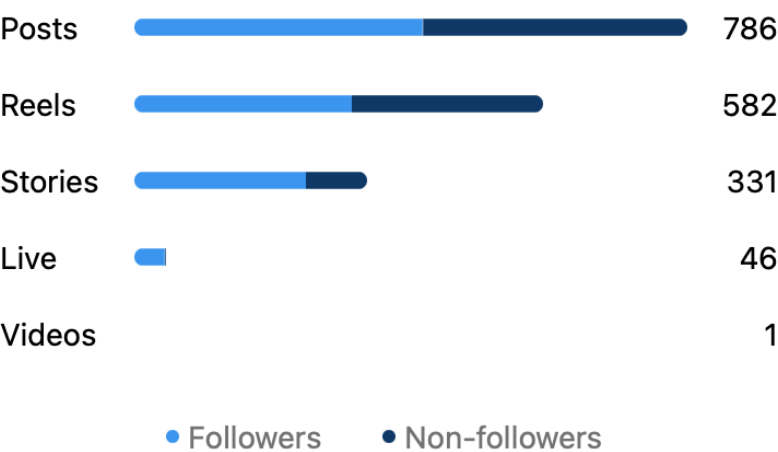
→ On Instagram, the main audience is Asia and Arab States.

Location

Cities Countries

Bangladesh	2,112
India	511
Algeria	469
United States	391
Egypt	358
Tunisia	307
Mexico	284
Switzerland	275
Saudi Arabia	269
Nigeria	260

X stats:
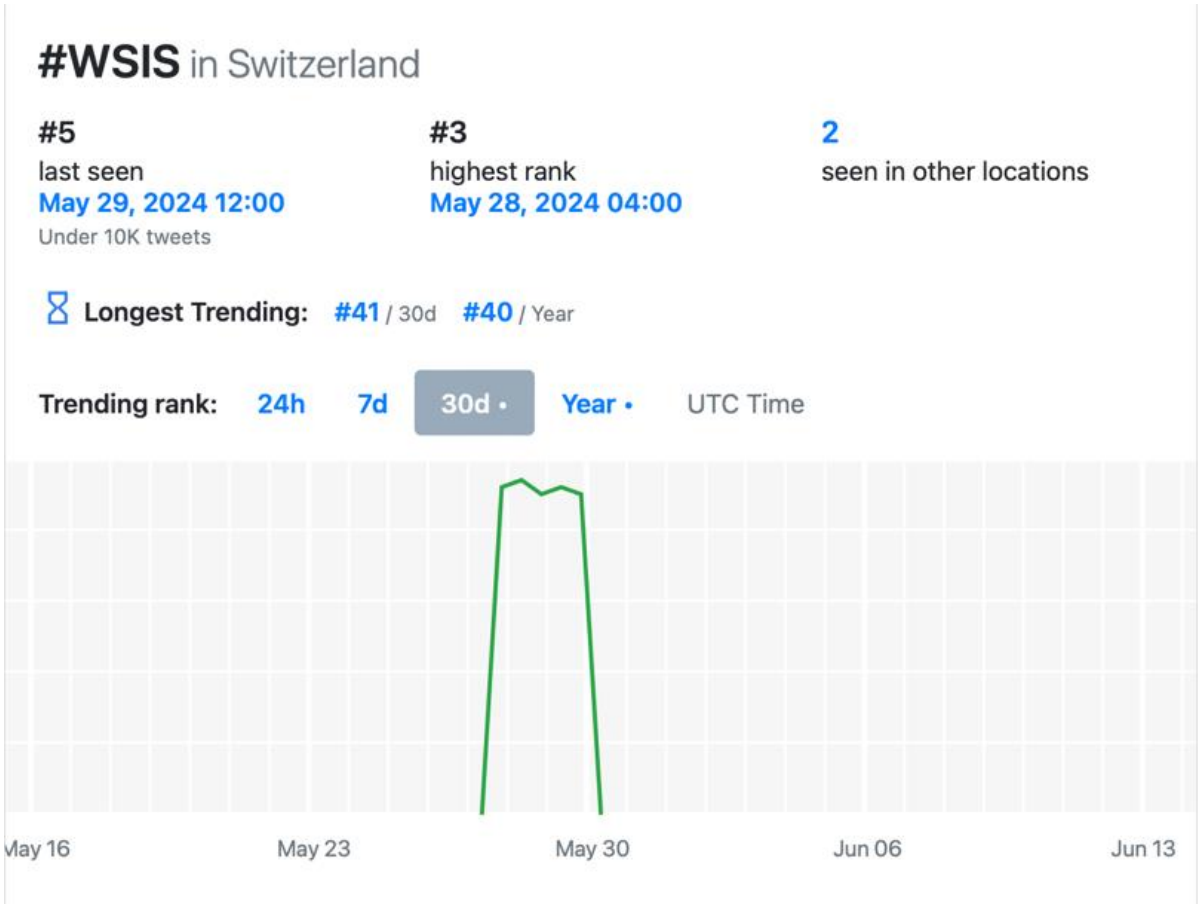
HIGH-LEVEL PLENARY SESSIONS

The WSIS Moon Shot: Crystal-balling the next 20 years!

Monday, 27 May 2024, 09:00-09:30
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/354

The discussion commemorated two decades of WSIS and explored the digital journey ahead, gathering experts from various fields to reflect on WSIS milestones, address digital challenges, and shape the future of global digital growth. Participants evaluated the significant progress in global internet access, digital literacy programs, cybersecurity strategies, and inclusive digital development policies, while acknowledging the persistent challenges, such as the 2.6 billion unconnected individuals and the need for relevant online content in diverse languages. The forum highlighted the transformative impact of digital technologies on sectors like agriculture, public health, and education, emphasizing the need for robust digital public infrastructure and prioritizing educational opportunities for youth to ensure that digital advancements benefit all members of society, particularly the marginalized and vulnerable. Looking forward, the discussion outlined a vision for global digital growth, stressing the necessity of maintaining WSIS's multistakeholder principles, enhancing international cooperation, and aligning digital technologies with sustainable development goals. The session concluded with a call to action to build on past achievements while addressing remaining challenges, aiming to foster a more connected and inclusive world and pave the way for an equitable and prosperous digital future.

Speakers participating in the discussion:

- Mr. Tomas Lamanauskas Deputy Secretary-General International Telecommunication Union (ITU)
- Mr. Thomas Schneider (WSIS+20 Forum HLE Chair Representative), Ambassador and Director of International Affairs Office Fédéral de la Communication (OFCOM)

- H.E. Dr. Bosun Tijani, Minister, Federal Ministry of Communications, Innovation and Digital Economy, Nigeria
- Dr. Thomas Coughlin, 2024 IEEE President
- Ms. Maria Fernanda Garza, Chair, International Chamber of Commerce
- Ms. Anriette Esterhuysen, Senior Advisor Global and Regional Internet Governance, Association for Progressive Communications (APC)

Mr. Tomas Lamanauskas, ITU Deputy Secretary General:

Mr. Lamanauskas highlighted that when WSIS commenced, only 785 million people, or 12.4% of the global population, had internet access. By 2024, an estimated 5.4 billion people, constituting 67% of the world's population, are online. The ITU has consistently supported countries in implementing digital literacy programs, formulating cybersecurity strategies, and adopting inclusive digital development policies. However, he emphasized that 2.6 billion people remain unconnected, and many more are hindered by weak infrastructure, limited digital skills, and a lack of relevant online content in their native languages. This digital exclusion persists despite the accelerating digital transformation. Additionally, Mr. Lamanauskas pointed out the new challenges and opportunities presented by the rise of technologies such as artificial intelligence, which necessitate continued collaborative efforts to bridge the digital divide.

Mr. Thomas Schneider (WSIS+20 Forum High-Level Event Chair Representative), Ambassador and Director of International Affairs Office Fédéral de la Communication (OFCOM):

Mr. Schneider emphasized Switzerland's longstanding support for WSIS since its inception in Geneva 20 years ago. He noted that this anniversary is both a time for celebration and reflection. The upcoming Summit of the Future and the WSIS+20 review by the UN General Assembly will play a pivotal role in shaping the course of global digital futures. He stated that the GDC is an essential tool for updating WSIS's vision and enhancing its structure. While acknowledging that WSIS has not been without its challenges, Mr. Schneider praised its role in fostering international cooperation and shaping the digital agenda. He stressed the importance of avoiding duplication and focusing efforts on practical implementation, underscoring the necessity of strengthening multilateral and multi-stakeholder approaches for future success.

H.E. Dr. Bosun Tijani, Minister, Federal Ministry of Communications, Innovation and Digital Economy, Nigeria:

Dr. Tijani reflected on Nigeria's significant digital progress over the past 20 years, with nearly 150 million people connected and over 200 million mobile phone lines established. He highlighted the substantial impact of digital technologies on enhancing productivity across key sectors such as agriculture and public health. With 70% of Nigeria's population under 25, Dr. Tijani stressed the importance of prioritizing educational opportunities for young people to integrate into the global economy. He mentioned Nigeria's initiative of running the world's largest talent accelerator, training 3 million technical experts. Dr. Tijani emphasized the need to rebuild trust by addressing the needs of the population and investing in digital public infrastructure to ensure sustained growth and development.

Dr. Thomas Coughlin, 2024 IEEE President:

Dr. Coughlin, representing the world's largest technical professional association, IEEE, which has over 460,000 members globally, reiterated IEEE's dedication to advancing technology for the benefit of

humanity. He spoke about the rapid developments in technologies such as artificial intelligence, quantum computing, and biotechnology, which present both significant opportunities and challenges. Dr. Coughlin highlighted the critical role of standards in ensuring technologies operate seamlessly, thereby supporting sustainability, energy efficiency, and the circular economy. He emphasized that standards promote equity and inclusion, creating a level playing field for innovation. As we approach WSIS+30, he noted that the importance of standards will grow, ensuring that technological advancements address ethical, environmental, and social considerations. According to Dr. Coughlin, standards are vital for aligning technological progress with a sustainable, inclusive, and principled future.

Ms. Maria Fernanda Garza, Chair, International Chamber of Commerce:

Ms. Garza recalled the key considerations established at WSIS 20 years ago, recognizing the enormous potential of digital technologies for inclusive social and economic growth. She stressed that this potential can only be fully realized through multi-stakeholder cooperation involving governance, business, civil society, and the technical and academic communities. Ms. Garza highlighted the business community's commitment to advancing the global agenda by partnering with governments and stakeholders to inform better policy outcomes. She emphasized the critical role of sustainable private sector investment in driving further economic and social development. Ms. Garza called for the alignment of public policies to promote, rather than deter, investment in infrastructure, technologies, applications, and services. She urged governments to enable participation from all relevant stakeholders to generate effective, timely policies that support innovation and shared interests.

Ms. Anriette Esterhuysen, Senior Advisor, Association for Progressive Communications (APC):

Ms. Esterhuysen emphasized WSIS's crucial role in fostering cooperation among diverse stakeholders to address the challenges of the digital age. As WSIS+20 approaches, she urged stakeholders to reaffirm WSIS's goal of a people-centered, inclusive Information Society. She called for adjusting action lines to combat persistent digital inequality and address pressing issues such as climate change. Ms. Esterhuysen stressed the importance of renewing commitments to WSIS principles, integrating GDC follow-up, and prioritizing gender justice to ensure technology benefits all. Despite the progress in digital technology, she pointed out that access barriers persist, reinforcing inequalities. The twenty-year review, she noted, offers an opportunity to refocus on the well-being of people and the planet. She highlighted the need for WSIS+20 to build on the IGF's approach, ensuring inclusive, transparent, and accountable governance. Ms. Esterhuysen emphasized recognizing digital technologies as global public resources, ensuring corporate accountability, and public financing for digital infrastructure. She concluded by underscoring the necessity of effective global cooperation, preserving historical gains in gender equality and human rights, and amplifying the voices of the most vulnerable.

The WSIS welcome Part I: Meet the Movers Behind It!

Monday, 27 May 2024, 09:30-09:45

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/356

The WSIS welcome Part II: and now for the Shakers!

Monday, 27 May 2024, 10:15-10:25

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/358

WSIS+20 Forum High-Level Event: Handover and the Appointment of Chair

Monday, 27 May 2024, 10:25-10:30

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/490

Video Message by the UN Secretary-General

Monday, 27 May 2024, 14:00-14:02
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/532

United Nations Secretary-General: Mr António Guterres
Message to the WSIS+20 Forum High-Level Event 2024
27 May 2024

Excellencies,

I am pleased to convey my warmest wishes as you gather for the 20th anniversary of the World Summit on the Information Society.

And I would like to thank the International Telecommunication Union for their long-standing coordination of this work and for co-hosting this event with the Swiss Confederation.

Two decades ago, this Summit laid an important foundation for global digital cooperation that could stand the test of time.

Over the years, WSIS has evolved to consider new challenges and opportunities in the digital space, supported by the commitment of 40 United Nations entities.

As we celebrate this milestone, we also recognize the challenges that lie ahead for our information society:
Bridging the digital divide, so that technology can accelerate progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals;
Ensuring information integrity in an era of deep-fakes and disinformation;
And reinforcing the multistakeholder foundations of Internet governance.

Governments, civil society, the private sector, the technical community, and academia, all have a role to play.

This Forum represents a vital opportunity to consider the proposals of an ambitious Global Digital Compact and prepare for the Summit of the Future in September.

Together, let us harness the benefits of the information society for an open, safe, inclusive, and sustainable digital future.

Thank you.

UN Leaders dialogue on the progress and future of digital cooperation

Monday, 27 May 2024, 10:35-11:30

https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/398

This UN Leaders dialogue session underscored the crucial role of UN organisations in driving ICTs for development. It emphasized the importance of effective participation and cooperation of the UN system and provided examples of strategies and actions from different UN organisations.

Key Takeaways:

ITU
Ms. Doreen Bogdan-Martin underlined ITU's role on the evolution of digital cooperation since the first WSIS phase in Geneva in advancing the SDGs and highlighted the WSIS process for its transparency, inclusivity, and innovation. She underscored the top priority of the UN System to break down the silos and look at how digital can cut across all sectors of the economy. Looking ahead, she stressed on the importance of system-wide collaboration for upcoming opportunities such as the Global Digital Compact, the Summit of the Future, the Pact for the Future, and the WSIS+20 review.

FAO
Mr. Dongyu Qu accentuated the need for an inclusive and sustainable digital transformation to enhance agricultural productivity, ensure food security, and support global efforts to eradicate hunger and poverty. He underscored the necessity for collaborative efforts to actively shape the future through digital innovation. Examples include the Rome Call for AI Ethics and the FAO Food Forum.

UPU
Mr. Masahiko Metoki emphasized the role of UPU in leveraging digital technologies to enhance global postal services. He likened the UPU to a catalyst within the postal sector, through 1. Facilitator and Innovator; 2. Extensive Use of Digital Technologies; 3. Investment in Technology; 4. Role as a Driver in Digital Innovation

WTO
Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala underscored: 1. Digital advancements in trade are among the most promising areas; 2. Growth of digitally delivered services, such as accounting, education, health, and entertainment; 3. Digital trade supports inclusivity, benefiting SMEs, women-driven, and youth-driven enterprises; and 4. WTO various initiatives facilitate digital trade. Dr. Ngozi concluded by emphasizing collaborative efforts to address digital challenges and promote global digital trade.

OHCHR
Mr. Volker Türk stressed the importance of integrating human rights into digital governance to fully leverage digital technologies. Key points including 1. Human Rights Framework, applicable online and offline, guiding power dynamics and governance to benefit all, especially the marginalized; 2. Digital cooperation should focus on human-centered approaches; 3. Addressing power dynamics in digital governance; 4. Ensuring digital access for all is a fundamental human rights issue; 5. Outdated Ideological barriers on human rights need to be overcome to ensure inclusive digital governance. Mr. Türk concluded by calling for a renewed commitment to human rights as the foundation for digital cooperation and governance.

UNECE

Ms. Tatiana Molcean drew attention to the pivotal role of digital cooperation in enhancing transparency and governance in environmental matters towards more sustainable behaviors. She emphasized the transformative impact of digital tools, citing the Aarhus Convention as an effective instrument that facilitated meaningful public engagement, leading to informed decision-making and concrete policy outcomes. Furthermore, digital tools have enabled initiatives like digital product passports in sectors such as garment and footwear, promoting sustainability by empowering consumers with transparent information.

UNICC

Mr. Sameer Chauhan emphasized the importance of cooperative digital objectives within the UN system through adopting new technologies and advancing digital transformation. He highlighted three key digital capacities, including 1. the need for creating digital goods through promoting open-source solutions and fostering reuse and scalability across UN entities; 2. the importance of building modern data expertise within the UN system to improve data collection, governance, and utilization; 3. advocating for a unified cybersecurity posture across all UN entities to address vulnerabilities collectively.

ILO

Ms. Celeste Drake addressed the transformative impact of digitalization on global employment. She highlighted AI's potential to replace certain jobs while creating new ones, highlighting challenges such as embedded biases and surveillance risks. The ILO is committed to a human-centered approach, advocating for labor rights and supporting skills development to bridge digital divides. Future initiatives include setting standards for platform economy work by 2025 and establishing an observatory on AI and the digital economy in collaboration with UN partners like ITU. These efforts aim to equip stakeholders with essential data and insights for informed decision-making in the evolving digital workplace.

UNIDO

Mr. Ciyong Zou underlined the importance of digital cooperation to ensure that technology benefits everyone globally. He outlined key principles including: 1. Inclusiveness: Ensuring no one is left behind by addressing the digital divide and creating a universally accessible digital environment; 2. Responsible AI: Developing AI that is transparent, safe, and free from bias; 3. Sustainability: Utilizing digital tools to combat climate change while minimizing their environmental impact; 4. Multi-Stakeholder Engagement: Encouraging collaboration across various sectors to turn these principles into actionable practices. He highlighted that UNIDO's efforts focus on tech cooperation projects, knowledge sharing, and promoting digital public goods.

HIGH-LEVEL SUBSTANTIVE SESSION

Network of Women Ministers and Leaders in ICT (ITU)

Tuesday, 28 May 2024, 07:45-09:00

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/416

High-Level Track Facilitators Summary and Certificates

Thursday, 30 May 2024, 15:30-16:30

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/524

MINISTERIAL ROUNDTABLE

Tuesday, 28 May 2024, 13:30-15:30

https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/427

The Ministers provided an overview of the progress and challenges in the field of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) and emphasized that WSIS has been pivotal in uniting governments and stakeholders in the ICT domain since its creation. However, there are significant challenges ahead to connect the remaining 2.6 billion people worldwide who are unconnected.

The Ministers acknowledged the potential of technology for both positive and negative uses, prompting a call for greater responsibility and accountability from platform providers in combatting online threats. To address the evolving issues that accompany technological advancements, there is a need to strengthen digital cooperation between governments and with the private sector.

The Ministers recognized the importance of WSIS being able to adapt and integrate new technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), ensuring its continued relevance in global digital governance.

Key themes from the Ministers' interventions include:

- **Connectivity and Infrastructure Development**: The development of ICT infrastructure, such as broadband and fiber optics, is crucial for improving connectivity, especially in underserved areas.
- **Inclusivity and Bridging the Digital Divide**: Ensuring that the benefits of ICT reach all populations, including vulnerable and rural communities, is vital for democratizing access to technology.
- **Digital Literacy and Capacity Building**: Training and capacity-building initiatives in digital skills are essential to equip individuals and communities to use ICT effectively.
- **Cross-border Data Flow and Cybersecurity**: Cybersecurity strategies, concerns about cross-border data flow and the role of big companies in data asymmetry are significant points of discussion for advancing the role of digital in development.
- **E-Government and Digital Services**: Progress in e-government platforms and digital public services aims to improve government efficiency and citizen access to services.
- **Financial Inclusion and E-Payment Systems**: Leveraging ICT for financial inclusion involves the development of e-payment and e-banking systems, particularly for remote areas.
- **Response to COVID-19**: The pandemic has accelerated digital technology adoption and underscored the need for robust ICT infrastructure.
- **Regulatory Frameworks and Policy Development**: Regulatory frameworks are key to managing ICT development, including data protection and AI ethics.
- **Collaboration and Global Partnerships**: International collaboration, as facilitated by WSIS, is crucial for overcoming challenges and achieving ICT goals.
- **Technological Innovation and Emerging Technologies**: Innovation and the adoption of emerging technologies are seen as essential for economic growth and development.

The Ministers concluded as follows:

- The interventions shared underscore a collective commitment to harnessing ICT for socio-economic advancement, increasing inclusivity, and ensuring that the digital transformation benefits everyone.
- The WSIS Principles and Action Lines continue to serve as a time-tested reference for global digital discussions.
- The outcomes of the WSIS, namely, the Geneva Declaration of Principles and Plan of Action along with the Tunis Commitment and Tunis Agenda for the Information Society, adopted by the Heads of States and Government, remain the foundation for global digital policies and cooperation. They support our shared vision of a people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented information and knowledge societies that fully respect and uphold the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
- The upcoming WSIS+20 review offers a prime opportunity for evolving the WSIS Outcomes to encompass the latest advancements moving forward, integrating new technologies such as AI, and ensuring that the WSIS continues to support inclusive global digital governance and digital development.
- The WSIS Forum has been the time-tested multistakeholder platform for deliberations on digital development policies, exchanging best practices, and fostering partnerships.
- The WSIS should be leveraged for the follow-up and implementation of the Global Digital Compact (GDC). Its established Principles and Action Lines remain central in global digital discussions, as clearly demonstrated in recent declarations.

STRATEGIC PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

Spotlight Platinum Partner: United Arab Emirates

Monday, 27 May 2024, 09:45-09:50

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/388

Spotlight Gold Partner: Saudi Arabia

Monday, 27 May 2024, 10:30-10:34

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/395

Spotlight Gold Partner

Monday, 27 May 2024, 14:30-14:33

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/522

PARTNER'S INSIGHT

Partner's Insight: United Arab Emirates-Platinum Partner (United Arab Emirates)

Monday, 27 May 2024, 14:15-15:00

Please find the session details here:

https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/401

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Accelerate the progress towards achieving the SDGs: Saudi Arabia Perspective (Saudi Arabia)

Monday, 27 May 2024, 15:15-16:00

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/407

Actioning SDG 5 by empowering women's participation in and through ICT (DPO)

Monday, 27 May 2024, 16:15-17:00

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/520

"Re" Generative AI: Using Artificial and Human Intelligence in tandem for innovation (International Federation for Information Processing - IP3)

Tuesday, 28 May 2024, 09:00-09:45
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/140

Key Issues discussed

- How AI, especially Generative AI, and should be used in tandem with Human Intelligence for Innovation
- Demonstration of AI agents and various tools for music and videos
- Tools that can be used to create/program AI, e.g. Python
- The importance of context in prompts and outcomes
- AI and Knowledge Management
- Recommendations for use of Generative AI

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

- Continued emphasis on Security in ICT systems. The threat evolves all the time so we must be continually vigilant.
- Challenge in collating the information shared in WSIS forum sessions into the relevant Action Lines. Much of what is presented is lost in this context. It would be wonderful to have a dashboard where this can be viewed including how it relates to the SDGs.
- The achievement is that the process is continuing after 20 years, with flexibility and agility.
- Contribution of the Action Line achievements to Sustainable Development Goals.
- Opportunity to make the information available which will help review and achievement of the Action Lines

Tangible outcomes (such as key achievements, announcements, launches, agreements, commitments, figures, and success stories)

- PeaceGPT – which was created by OpenAI for conflict resolution. We must partner to explore how this can be used to reduce hate speech.
- This workshop, which had one video demonstration and one verbal presentation, but other than that the Panelists spoke for only one or two minutes (without prepared questions). This allowed for a great deal of interaction with the audience, and feedback from delegates was extremely positive. This is our Session success story!

Actionable plan and key recommendations

- Need more investment in the "human being" to ensure they realise the benefits of AI but are not harmed.

- Researchers must continue to give input to LLMs, with additional explanations to ensure that the outcomes are based on reality and empirical evidence. Also ensure that the context is evident, because the people who build GPT don't always know this.
- Education is essential to ensure responsible use of AI.

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

A complete review of achievements against Action Lines and SDGs incorporating content from presentations and workshops for, say, the past five years.

Roll up, Roll up and learn "How can digital development accelerate the achievement of the SDGs and help the work of the WSIS process in this space?" (Department of Science, Innovation and Technology, and the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, United Kingdom)

Tuesday, 28 May 2024, 09:00-09:45

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/151

AI for Energy Innovation & Sustainability (IEEE)

Tuesday. 28 May 2024, 11:00-11:45
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/218

Key Issues discussed

- **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.**

    - Noted the importance and value of using the WSIS multistakeholder approach to further the work on implementing the SDGs, in particular support for the energy transition.
    - Identified a need for new standards to be developed that address sustainable energy, including its generation, distribution, storage and use.
    - Noted the importance of collaboration and applying the multistakeholder approach in advancing SDGs in the implementation and use of sustainable energy solutions
    - The energy transition can benefit from AI applications that can be used to better manage the resource and power generation. However, AI does bring about concerns related to increased energy consumption, carbon emissions, and water usage–for example in data centres.

- **Tangible outcomes (such as key achievements, announcements, launches, agreements, commitments, figures, and success stories**

    - Noted the role of AI as it sits at the intersection of emerging technology and sustainable development to support the energy transition.
    - Discussed the challenges being faced by numerous sectors in implementing sustainable energy solutions. Including the need to have diverse solutions for regions as no region or state is the same. Using the WSIS principles will be important in developing and considering the implementation of any sustainable energy solution.
    - Discussed ongoing standards development work on creating solutions and applications to support Green Data Centers for the processing of emerging technology data.

- **Actionable plan and key recommendations**

    - Identified the need for more multi stakeholder participation to work on sustainable energy standards so that solutions can be developed to meet the needs of all regions seeking sustainable energy solutions to implement.
    - Acknowledged the importance of the work underway to identify sustainable solutions to support emerging technology needs such as the data processing needs of AI Large Language Models and the insights that AI provides to meet the UN 2030 SDG goals.

Suggestions for thematic aspects that might be included in the WSIS Forum 2025 (WSIS+20 Forum High-Level Event)

Next year's WSIS could focus on the WSIS journey from its beginnings to WSIS+20, documenting and demonstrating the impact that WSIS and the multistakeholder model has had on including and elevating everyone towards full implementation of the SDGs.

Intelligence artificielle et désinformation: des solutions techniques et politiques / Artificial intelligence and disinformation: technical and political solutions (Mission permanente de Belgique - Wallonie-Bruxelles à Genève)

Tuesday, 28 May 2024, 11:00-11:45
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/312

Key Issues discussed

- Technical solutions to disinformation generated by AI: collaborative platforms (e.g. Dinfinfopedia), plug-ins, smartphone apps, AI/VR interface; see: AI4Debunk projet https://ai4debunk.eu/
- Regulatory solutions to disinformation: EU Digital Services Act and EU AI Act; see research done by CRIDS: https://www.crids.eu/
- Disinformation in times of crises: "information is war's first victim": impact of disinformation on people's physical and psychological conditions; impact of disinformation on the chances to end conflicts; impact of disinformation on people's trust. See the work done by the ICRC: https://digital-dilemmas.com/info/
- UN Human Rights Council resolution on disinformation (55th session of the HRC): State's role in mitigating it. See resolution on "Role of States in countering the negative impact of disinformation on the enjoyment and realization of human rights"(3 April 2024): https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/g24/059/18/pdf/g2405918.pdf?token=YWqyGftz ZjT8gh6gY4&fe=true
- A "Fairness doctrine" for our times: being able to talk interact, online and offline, and have the right to dispute respectfully; therefore to not imprison people in algorithmic filter bubbles.

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

- On WSIS action line 9 Media: in our workshop, it was clear that the media still hasn't recovered from the digital shift. Information (led by social media algorithmic systems) is not about access to knowledge anymore but about finding information that will excite people.
- WSIS action line 8 on cultural diversity is getting more and more challenging to fulfil as well because of the algorithmic systems used by big platforms of information and cultural content. One trend identified in our workshop is that people are being imprisoned/trapped in filter bubbles by these algorithms.
- Nevertheless on WSIS action line 6 Enabling environment: we see a positive trend of regulation, namely coming from the European Union. Even though regulation is seen in the digital sector as putting barriers to innovation, it does serve WSIS action lines and purpose of inclusivity and progress of humanity through digital technology.

Tangible outcomes (such as key achievements, announcements, launches, agreements, commitments, figures, and success stories)

Collaborative platforms to fight disinformation like ODIL: https://odil.org/ ; The French-speaking platform for initiatives to combat misinformation.

Actionable plan and key recommendations

- Promote Internet as a common space with rules like there are on the streets of our towns. To not let Internet become just a collection of private spaces (platforms), that trap users in filter bubbles. One example of regulation to tackle this issue: EU Digital Services Act.
- To pay specific attention to ICT uses in times of crises (war or other crises): harmful information can jeopardize people's physical and psychological health, but also the capacity to find a peaceful resolution to conflicts and trust in institutions.

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

The discussion held in our workshop (strong of more than 70 people in the room and with about 30 questions online – numbers of participants online still to be checked), clearly indicates that the impact of ICTs on democracy is not to be underestimated. Therefore the links between democracy and development in the digital age seems to be an important thematic aspect to be included in the WSIS Forum 2025.

Capacity building for emerging leaders to protect the Internet (Internet Society)

Tuesday, 28 May 2024, 13:30.14:15

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/313

REGIONAL INSIGHT

WSIS Regional Commissions meeting

Thursday, 30 May 2024, 14:00-14:45

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/479

INTERACTIVE ACTION LINE FACILITATION MEETING

WSIS Action Line C7: e-Learning: Empowering Educators and learners: Enhancing Teacher Training ad e-Learning for Digital Inclusion (UNESCO)

Tuesday, 28 May 2024, 09:00-10:00

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/459

WSIS Action Line C5: Beneath the Waves: Safeguarding Global Connectivity through Secure Submarine Networks (ITU)

Tuesday, 28 May 2024, 10:00-10:45

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/170

WSIS Action Line C7: E-business and the Global Digital Compact (ITC, UPU, UNCTAD)

Tuesday, 28 May 2024, 13:30-14:15 PM
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/235

Key Issues discussed

- E-business is about creating digital opportunities for businesses and development. The Global Digital Compact (GDC) Rev 1 draft covers several *objectives* that are relevant to the e-business action line: one concerns the need to expand inclusion in and benefits from the digital economy, another deals with the international governance of data, which is a driver of the digital economy, and a third with Artificial Intelligence (AI).
- Many of the principles in the GDC draft are also relevant from the e-business perspective: inclusivity, development orientation, gender equality and empowering of female leadership, environmental sustainability and equity, and innovation-friendliness.
- The GDC draft refers to established WSIS follow-up entities, such as the Internet Governance Forum, the WSIS action lines, and the Commission on Science and Technology for Development. In addition, the Office of the Special Envoy of Technology is supporting the process of developing the GDC.
- The GDC draft has many useful and good intentions, but there is scope to strengthen certain important issues related to e-business. There is little mention of inclusive trade or digital trade, of small businesses (not only entrepreneurs) and of the governance of digital platforms. There is also a need for more emphasis on ensuring that the benefits of the digital economy are distributed equitably.
- The postal network continues to be a key vehicle for digital inclusion specifically for micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs). It can advance the deployment of the digital infrastructure and the uptake of digital services, including financial and e-government services. The draft of the GDC should include post offices in its commitment to universal connectivity.
- The GDC should clearly acknowledge the current shortfalls, as well as the tremendous opportunities, of digitalization for development. The text could eventually emphasize more the challenges we need to address in digital governance, or policies that are not purely digital in nature, such as competition and taxation, but are needed to frame the digital economy. The draft could also recognize that MSMEs, especially from developing countries, should be adequately represented in the dialogue around digitalization for development.
- The principle of a right to participate in online trade should be formulated, given that the future of work may entail access to digital networks and services.

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

- WSIS beyond 2025 should consider the objectives laid out in the GDC and reflect how a well-established WSIS process can support their implementation.
- The need for data and official statistics to support digital economy policy making and monitoring is more pressing than ever. Countries and international organizations must

improve the availability of internationally comparable statistics on e-commerce and the digital economy.

- For example, in Zambia, despite availability of ICT services and improvements in connectivity due to infrastructure deployments, the actual adoption or usage of e-commerce by the MSMEs is relatively low. The GDC could offer prospects for unlocking adoption of e-commerce among the MSMEs. It could increase the availability of resources to leverage e-commerce or develop digital skills among MSMEs.
- Another example, in Kenya, there is a $340 billion financing gap in fintech for underserved MSMEs, mostly informal. Fifty percent of those who are excluded are women across sub-Saharan Africa.

Tangible outcomes (such as key achievements, announcements, launches, agreements, commitments, figures, and success stories)

- UNCTAD's eTrade Readiness Assessments have been of great importance for developing countries to diagnose gaps in key policy areas that enable digital readiness and e-commerce. For example, Trinidad and Tobago not only identified gaps, but also challenges and opportunities. The assessment will serve as a basis for the development of a national e-commerce strategy and put the country on a pathway towards meaningful inclusion into the global digital economy. Access to such support services may not be sufficiently inclusive: there appears to be a gap in funding that may exclude access to international support on the part of small non LDC countries.
- In this context, the action line on e-business welcomes the mention in the GDC of multilateral organizations as well as governments to support national digital readiness assessments and provide technical assistance.
- The GDC should be very deliberate in articulating the actions that various stakeholders will need to take to achieve its objectives. It will be a collaborative effort.

Actionable plan and key recommendations

- It's important to ensure that the GDC pays adequate attention to small businesses, trade and governance to ensure equitable outcomes from digitalization.
- We need to consider holistic and practical approaches to the implementation of the GDC objectives. For example, to drive digital financial inclusion for women in developing countries, we must address cultural barriers, policies that prevent women from accessing affordable credit, and providing financial education and developing digital skills.
- Governments and international organizations should continue working to improve the availability of official statistics on e-commerce and the digital economy that can support e-commerce and digital economy for development policies.

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

- Ensuring coherence in the implementation of WSIS and Summit of the Future outcomes.
- Bridging the digital divide: Strategies to ensure equitable access to ICT for all, including marginalized communities, rural areas, and developing countries.
- Future of work: Impact of digital transformation on jobs, skills, and employment.
- AI for good: Harnessing artificial intelligence to address global challenges and improve quality of life.
- Enhancing digital skills: Initiatives to improve digital literacy and education at all levels.

WSIS Action Line C6: Enabling Environment "Collaborative Regulation Interactive workshop" with the active participation of Regional Regulatory Associations (RAs) (ITU)

Tuesday, 28 May 2024, 14:30-15:15 PM
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/429

Key Issues discussed.

- The primary objective of this session was to discuss with Regional Regulatory Associations and their members the critical questions that ICT stakeholders encounter while embracing transformative technologies for greater impact.
- Some of the critical questions that were addressed included the significance of collaboration in advancing the national and regional transformation agenda, defining success criteria, sharing examples and experiences of innovative collaborative regulatory projects.
- Regulators are required to serve as enablers and facilitators, and it is imperative that they share their experiences and innovations with other regulatory bodies.
- Collaboration among various national regulators is crucial for successful digital transformation. This includes cooperation and partnerships between consumer protection authorities, competition authorities, and other regulators.
- International cooperation with international organizations, knowledge exchange with other regulators, and partnerships and collaboration with Regional Regulatory Associations (RAs) are essential for achieving digital transformation.

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.

- In the framework of the work done in the Telecommunication Development Sector, ITU is the lead facilitator of WSIS Action Line C6 on Enabling Environment.
- Over the years, ITU has been providing convening and knowledge exchange platforms to discuss measures and solutions such as fostering open access to international fiber, affordable access for sustainable development, connectivity during and in the post COVID digital world, and more.
- The work done by ITU on collaborative regulation focuses on the interplay between ICT markets and regulation and the innovative regulatory tools and processes at hand to support Membership and stakeholders to further enable digital transformation.
- ITU remains committed to fostering a regulatory environment that promotes innovation while safeguarding the interests of all stakeholders.
- In terms of key opportunities, challenges and emerging trends, based on the outputs from the Action Line C6 facilitation meetings, one of the main challenges of collaborative regulation at national and regional level is to break silos, and bring together the expertise to foster collaboration across sectors and borders.
- Our collective strength lies in exchanging knowledge, harmonizing regulatory approaches, and coordinating actions for maximum impact.

Tangible outcomes (such as key achievements, announcements, launches, agreements, commitments, figures, and success stories)

- The session was conducted under the framework of the Digital Regulation Network (DRN) Initiative. The DRN launched last year to accelerate sustainable digital transformation through common approaches to collaborative digital policy, regulation and governance across economic sectors and borders working directly with Regional Regulatory Associations (RAs) and their members at the regional and global level.
- The Global Symposium for Regulators (GSR-24), which will be held in Kampala, Uganda, from 1 to 4 July 2024, under the theme 'Regulation for impact', was mentioned, and the participants were invited to register.

Exploring the Vital Role of E-Government in Advancing Sustainable Development Goals (UN DESA)

Tuesday, 28 May 2024, 15:30-16:15
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/350

Key Issues discussed

- Methodological updates about the upcoming United Nations E-Government Survey 2024.
- Application of Local Online Service Index Methodology.
- Challenges in collecting ICT indicators
- Capacity building activities by UNU-EGOV - As a forward-thinking policy-oriented entity, we lead innovation, actively exploring and advocating emerging technologies to transform public service delivery on a worldwide scale.
- Successful partnerships: Examples were shared of successful partnerships between different stakeholders (governments, NGOs, private sector) that leveraged e-government tools to achieve specific SDG targets, highlighting the significance of collaboration.
- GovStack as governments with essential tools for digital services, including building block specifications, a sandbox for testing (upcoming), communities of practices, and more.
- Web portals and smart Government National Portal of Iran - Unified login
- E-government development index (EGDI) and Local Online Service Index (LOSI)

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

- Integration of Emerging Technologies in E-Government: E-government initiatives increasingly leverage emerging technologies like AI, blockchain, and IoT to enhance service delivery, improve efficiency, and promote citizen engagement.
- Digital Divide Mitigation through E-Government: E-government programs play a crucial role in bridging the digital divide by providing inclusive access to government services and fostering digital literacy and skills development, thereby addressing challenges of access and affordability.
- Alignment of E-Government with SDGs: E-government strategies are aligned with the SDGs, contributing to achieving sustainable development objectives such as poverty alleviation, quality education, and economic growth.
- Enhanced Government Transparency and Accountability: E-government implementations lead to enhanced transparency and accountability in governance through mechanisms like open data platforms and digital citizen engagement tools, fostering trust and participation in public decision-making processes.
- Data-driven Decision-making in E-Government: Governments can harness data analytics and insights from e-government initiatives to inform policy formulation, resource allocation, and service optimization, thus linking to the emerging trend of leveraging data for informed governance.
- International Cooperation in E-Government: International cooperation is vital in advancing e-government agendas, emphasizing the role of partnerships and knowledge sharing in accelerating progress towards shared ICT development goals.

- Ethical Considerations in E-Government: Ethical considerations related to e-government, such as data privacy, cybersecurity, and digital rights, are addressed to ensure equitable access, safeguard citizen rights, and maintain trust in digital government services.
- Application of Local Online Service Index (LOSI) methodology in several cities in a single country. Many studies are being conducted and new entities are welcome to join the LOSI Network: Application of LOSI methodology in countries

Tangible outcomes (such as key achievements, announcements, launches, agreements, commitments, figures, and success stories)

- Identification of best practices: Participants shared successful initiatives and approaches, providing tangible examples of how e-government is contributing to the achievement of SDGs.
- Commitments to collaboration: Stakeholders expressed a commitment to foster collaboration and knowledge sharing to facilitate effective implementation strategies for digital government initiatives.
- Recognition of challenges: Key challenges in e-government implementation were acknowledged, laying the groundwork for targeted solutions and initiatives to address them.

Actionable plan and key recommendations

- Develop standardized metrics: There is a need to develop standardized metrics for evaluating the impact of e-government initiatives, focusing on their contribution to poverty eradication, economic empowerment, and other SDGs.
- Strengthen capacity-building efforts: Recommendations were made to enhance capacity-building efforts to ensure that all stakeholders, especially underserved communities, have the necessary skills and resources to participate in the digital government landscape effectively.
- Foster multi-stakeholder partnerships: Encourage the establishment of multi-stakeholder partnerships to leverage diverse expertise and resources in advancing e-government initiatives and achieving SDG targets.

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

In WSIS Forum 2025, it would be valuable to include thematic sessions focusing on emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), blockchain, and Internet of Things (IoT), and their potential to further enhance e-government services and accelerate progress towards achieving the SDGs. Additionally, sessions could explore the role of digital inclusion and accessibility in ensuring that e-government initiatives leave no one behind, as well as strategies for overcoming barriers to adoption and utilization of digital services among marginalized populations.

WSIS Action Line C9: Milestones, Challenges and Emerging Trends in Freedom of Expression and Media Development (UNESCO)

Wednesday, 29 May 2024, 09:00-09:45
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/155

Key Issues discussed

20 CHALLENGING YEARS OF MULTI-STAKEHOLDERS' CONTRIBUTIONS AND INNOVATION TO MEDIA DEVELOPMENT

The session focused on WSIS Action Line C9, which addresses the pivotal role of media in shaping the Information Society during the last two decades. Some of the key issues discussed:

- The emergence of digital technologies, including artificial intelligence and surveillance technologies, has created new pressures on media, as well as how people consume media, impacting all elements under AL C9.
- The need to reframe the definition of "media" as "entity working based on journalism ethics and professional rules"; "social media" is not "media" and "all content producers" are not journalists.
- Online disinformation, misinformation, hate speech, and Technologically Facilitated Gender-Based Violence can have negative impact on Freedom of Expression.
- How laws, such as blasphemy, criminal defamation, sedition or censorship laws restrain media and a free and vibrant information society, and how this risk has increased in the digital age with the adoption of new types of legislation, including cyber-libel, cybersecurity and "fake news" laws.
- Information technology affects the safety of journalists (particularly women journalists), including legal harassment laws – from sedition to censorship – that have long been used to punish journalists and suppress media freedom with surveillance and disproportionate penalties. Some legal frameworks that protect journalists are not enforced.
- Safety of journalists, particularly women journalists, has decreased over the last 20 years, with on-line violence rising and leading to more physical violence. Some legal frameworks that protect journalists are not enforced.
- Technological Facilitated Gender Based Violence (TFGBV) affects women and vulnerable groups and AI can reproduce biases and amplify stereotypes.
- Crisis of credibility of the journalists due to disinformation and hate speech. Difficulties for journalists in monitoring the digital environment due to lack of resources and reduced access to platforms data.

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

- News media's traditional business model is at a breaking point. Media outlets have been forced to cut down on staff or close, with a loss of revenue to digital platforms.
- There is a declining trend in the killing of journalists except in war zones. Impunity for crimes against journalists remains very high.
- An increase in detentions and new types of attacks of journalists online and through surveillance as well as the misuse of legal systems (SLAPP).

- Increase in Technological Facilitated Gender Based Violence affecting Human Rights of women and vulnerable groups.

Tangible outcomes (such as key achievements, announcements, launches, agreements, commitments, figures, and success stories)

- The relevance of the Windhoek+30 Declaration on press freedom, describing information as a public good. The Declaration calls upon all governments to create positive enabling environments for freedom of expression and access to information, online and offline, in line with international guarantees of these rights.
- 140 different media laws, including some frameworks related to access to information have been adopted although not all are enforced, or with different levels of enforcement.
- The sector has organized itself: creation of the Global Forum for Media Development, Media Freedom Coalition, Information and Democracy Initiative for examples, to advocate for more protection and support to journalists and media.

Actionable plan and key recommendations

- Consolidate political commitment for massive Investment in Media and Information Literacy worldwide.
- There is a need for Digital Platforms regulations and change of approach from a business model to a public interest model (see UNESCO Guidelines for the Governance of the Digital Platforms).
- Advocate that the UN Pact for the Future includes clear and solid references to the protection of journalists and media actors, freedom of expression, the right to access reliable information
- In line with the Plan of Action on the prohibition of advocacy of national, racial or religious hatred adopted in 2012 in Rabat, States should review existing laws or develop, trough public participation, legislation on hate speech to meet the requirements of legality, necessity and proportionality, and establish or strengthen independent judicial mechanisms to ensure that individuals may have access to justice and remedies when suffering harms related to hate speech.
- States should decriminalize defamation and other offences that may impose disproportionate penalties on journalists and media, and adopt legislation that tackled strategic lawsuits against public participation (SLAPPs).
- States should impose a moratorium on the sale, transfer and use of surveillance technologies and, in the meantime, conduct human rights impact assessments when using, selling or transferring such technologies.

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

For the WSIS Forum 2025, a thematic focus could be on the evolving landscape of media and information, emphasizing the challenges and opportunities posed by digital transformation, keeping in mind that the word remains a hybrid place (off-line and on-line), and the imperative of safeguarding human rights in the digital age and in the "real world". This includes addressing the crisis facing traditional news media business models due to revenue losses to digital platforms, exploring innovative solutions to ensure media viability, private and public supports to public interest media, and examining the dual trends of decreasing journalist killings in non-war zones but increasing online harassment and legal threats. The forum should also focus on the rise of technology-facilitated gender-based violence, its impact on human rights, and strategies to protect vulnerable groups online. Furthermore, advocating for global investment in media and information literacy (MIL) is crucial to empower citizens, counter misinformation, and foster informed public discourse. The discussion should insist on the adoption and enforcement of media laws, compliant with international human

rights standards, as well as on the creation of enabling environments for freedom of expression and access to information. Reinforcing international declarations, such as the Windhoek+30 Declaration, and combating hate speech through comprehensive strategies aligned with the Rabat Plan of Action are also essential. Finally, developing actionable plans and commitments, including a proposed UN Pact for the Future, will address emerging challenges and leverage opportunities for a more inclusive, informed, and resilient global information society.

WSIS Action Line C10: The Future of the Ethical Dimensions of the Information Society: Impact on Artificial Intelligence (UNESCO)

Wednesday, 29 May 2024, 10:00-10:45
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/179

Key Issues Discussed

- Ethics of AI in the Information Society: Discussions emphasized the importance of ethical considerations in AI development and deployment, focusing on the potential impacts on society.
- UNESCO's Activities: Review of UNESCO's efforts in implementing the Recommendation on the Ethics of AI, including tools like the Readiness Assessment Methodology and the Ethical Impact Assessment.
- Private Sector Role: The significance of the private sector in establishing and maintaining ethical standards and guardrails for AI was underscored.
- Global Governance of AI: The conversation highlighted the necessity of involving the Global South in global AI governance discussions to ensure inclusive and equitable policy development.

View on Emerging Trends

- AI-Generated Synthetic Content: New challenges posed by AI-generated content, particularly in terms of intellectual property and copyright issues in creative industries, were discussed. The governance of such content is crucial to maintain ethical standards.
- Application of Ethical Principles: Emphasis was placed on the need for practical application of ethical AI principles across all policy domains to ensure consistency and effectiveness.

Tangible Outcomes

- Commitment to UNESCO's AI Ethics Recommendation: All stakeholders reaffirmed their dedication to advancing the implementation of UNESCO's Recommendation on the Ethics of AI.
- HealthAI joining UNESCO Business Council: HealthAI expressed interest in joining UNESCO's Business Council, indicating growing private sector engagement.
- Civil Society Observatory Participation: A representative from The Future Society will join UNESCO's Civil Society Observatory, enhancing multi-stakeholder collaboration.

Actionable Plan and Key Recommendations

- Implementation of UNESCO Recommendations:
  - Utilize the Readiness Assessment Methodology and the Ethical Impact Assessment tools.
  - Share data and insights via the Global AI Ethics and Governance Observatory.
  - Expand networks like Women4Ethical AI and the Business Council.
  - Foster closer collaboration with other UN agencies, particularly ITU and UNDP, to advance AI ethics discourse and avoid duplicating efforts.

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

For the WSIS Forum 2025, thematic aspects could encompass a comprehensive exploration of the ethics of AI within the information society, addressing the socio-economic impacts and highlighting the importance of inclusive global governance, including its impact on the SDGs. Key themes might include the role of the private sector in implementing ethical AI standards, the challenges posed by AI-generated synthetic content in creative industries, and the need for effective, cross-domain application of ethical principles. Discussions should prioritize the implementation and assessment of the UNESCO Recommendation on the Ethics of AI, fostering multi-stakeholder collaboration through networks like Women4Ethical AI and the Business Council. Emphasis on the participation of the Global South in shaping equitable AI policies, along with enhanced cooperation with UN agencies such as ITU and UNDP, would be crucial to ensure holistic and inclusive AI governance frameworks.

WSIS Action Line C4: Capacity development in emergency telecommunications: Building resilience through digital skills (ITU)

Wednesday, 29 May 2024, 10:00-10:45
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/329

Key Issues discussed

- The session emphasized the necessity for both citizens and emergency personnel to be prepared for disasters. This includes training in digital skills, equipment deployment and use, and technology to preserve lives and aid recovery.
- Discussions highlighted the need for technology to be paired with digital skills to ensure that emergency response staff can effectively use available technologies during and in the aftermath of a disaster.
- The panel touched upon the importance of emotional and physical readiness among emergency responders, alongside their technical training.
- Speakers shared examples of capacity development interventions at the regional and/or global levels such as IEEE's programmes for engineers and volunteers which focus on both technical and soft skills necessary for disaster response. These programmes include deploying mobile units for telecommunication infrastructure.
- The session stressed the importance of policy support in the development of ICT infrastructure. This includes formation of Computer Emergency Response Teams (CERT) and the elaboration of National Emergency Telecommunication Plans (NETP).
- Discussions highlighted the need for regional coordination and partnerships among governments, local authorities and International Organizations to ensure effective disaster response and infrastructure resilience.
- The utilization of existing social infrastructure such as schools, for emergency response centers and ensuring the inclusion of various stakeholders (including academic institutions and civil society organizations) in preparedness plans is essential.

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

- There is a growing emphasis on integrating digital skills with traditional emergency response skills. This includes training in the use of emerging technologies and equipment essential for disaster management.
- Training programmes are increasingly focusing on both technical and soft/leadership skills, recognizing that effective response requires resilience in these areas. Effective digital skills development can bridge the gap between technical practitioners and non-technical community members. This ensures that all stakeholders, including those in underserved areas, are equipped with the knowledge to respond to emergencies effectively.
- Panelists called for inclusive capacity development interventions that equip all communities, particularly the most vulnerable, with digital skills – this includes using a variety of media (radio, television, etc) to reach populations in areas where Internet penetration is low.
- Policymakers play a critical role in leveraging digital skills to strengthen emergency response ecosystems.

- Challenges discussed during the session include Infrastructure vulnerability (or total collapse) which hampers effective communication and response; policy gaps as many countries lack the necessary policies and frameworks to support comprehensive disaster response and preparedness, including digital skills development. Ensuring that training programmes reach all necessary stakeholders, especially in underserved areas, remains a challenge.
- Collaboration between governments, the private sector, academic institutions and civil society organizations was identified as essential for developing digital capacities at national and local levels. These partnerships can provide resources, expertise and innovation needed for effective emergency response.

Tangible outcomes (such as key achievements, announcements, launches, agreements, commitments, figures, and success stories)

- Through the "Media Saving lives" Project, over 2,000 media professionals were trained globally in effective communication during emergencies and crises, combining both digital and analog methods such as radio to reach wider audiences.
- Zimbabwe constituted a Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT) involving various stakeholders, including government ministries and customs authorities, enhancing the country's readiness and capacity to manage ICT infrastructure during disasters. The Ministry of ICT benefited from ITU's expertise and training programmes on how deploy, assemble and use ICT equipment to respond to disasters and emergencies.
- IEEE's MOVE truck initiative, run by trained volunteers, provides mobile disaster response units that can set up telecommunications and infrastructure support in disaster-affected areas, ensuring rapid deployment and response.

Actionable plan and key recommendations

- Expand training Initiatives: Extend the current training programs to cover a broader range of participants, including journalists, engineers, and volunteers, ensuring they possess both technical and soft skills necessary for disaster response.
- Leverage existing ITU programmes and capacity development interventions: Utilize ITU's existing capacity and training modules to enhance skills development across various regions, focusing on the deployment and use of emergency technology and ICT infrastructure.
- Develop National Emergency Telecommunication Plans (NETP): ITU should continue to support its member States to create and implement NETP and to ensure a coordinated regional response to disasters. This involves sharing expertise and resources across borders.
- Policy Support and Coordination: ITU should advocate for and assist in the development of national policies that support disaster preparedness and response, focusing on data protection, privacy, and ICT infrastructure resilience.
- Multi-stakeholder engagement: Foster partnerships with various stakeholders, including governmental bodies, international organizations (ITU, IEEE, Red Cross, etc), academia, and local communities. These collaborations will enhance the effectiveness of disaster response efforts.

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

The programme could also cover themes such as bridging the digital skills gap through policy support and regulation; as well as open the dialogue on how emerging technologies for education can be incorporated into national digital skills strategies

WSIS Action Line C3: Guaranteeing the online space for all (UNESCO)

Wednesday, 29 May 2024, 11:00-11:45
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/220

Key Issues discussed

- Private vs public access and their complementarity
- Role of libraries and impact of emerging technologies for professionals and audience
- Relation with other rights, such as freedom of expression, data privacy and safety
- Measurement, availability of quality data is essential, but not sufficient
- Need for standards and tools to ensure information remains accessible over time
- Importance of multilingualism

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

- **Achievements:**
    - Advancements in legal frameworks, digital technologies, and capacity-building initiatives that have expanded access to information globally.
    - Importance of digital connectivity and the free flow of, and access to, information as a vital means to support an open international community that upholds stability, security, rule of law, prosperity, and promotes sustainable development.
- **Key Challenges:** Persistent barriers such as lack of implementation, digital divides, threats to media freedom, and the spread of disinformation and misinformation.
    - **Challenge 1**: Need to highlight more the relation of Access to Information and knowledge with other rights: such as freedom of expression, human rights
    - **Challenge 2** : Ubiquitous connectivity, strong mobility, intuitive and user-friendly interfaces and new transactions channels, look beyond the classical governmental services available online and/ or through mobile devices. These technologies raise bigger challenges of an open and equitable access for all citizens to the knowledge and benefits to be derived from the resulting important expansions of Public Sector Information and Data.
    - **Challenge 3** : An unprecedented open release of public information is nowadays coupled to a high-volume exchange of extremely sensitive and/or personal data across government agencies and citizens.
    - **Challenge 4 :** Digital phenomena such as cloud computing, mobility, social media, big data, and artificial intelligence give rise to several complex security challenges as well as countless concerns for citizen privacy, with potential threats ranging from hacking or misinformation and disinformation to cyber-terrorism.
    - **Challenge 5:** Ensuring all citizens are properly equipped with the digital and information literacy skills, with a particular attention to women, children and marginalized groups. Be mindful of generational gaps.
- **Opportunities**
    - Proactively address citizen-consumer complaints through independent regulatory authorities.

- o Foster interdisciplinary research collaborations to effectively tackle societal challenges, improve research quality, and facilitate the education of new researchers.
- o Establish a universal framework guiding AI legislation, prioritizing human rights, dignity, equality, and equitable access to AI developments.

Tangible outcomes (such as key achievements, announcements, launches, agreements, commitments, figures, and success stories)

- On 18-20 February 2025, UNESCO will be holding a conference in Paris targeted at empowering civil servants for inclusive and sustainable governance.
- Since 2021, all Member States have approved the UNESCO Recommendation on the Ethics of AI as a standard setting instrument on the ethics of artificial intelligence.

Actionable plan and key recommendations

- Advocate for and raise more awareness how OHCHR recommendation mechanisms can be used for strengthening the implementation of the C3 action line.
- Proactively address citizen-consumer complaints through independent regulatory authorities.
- Foster interdisciplinary research collaborations to effectively tackle societal challenges, improve research quality, and facilitate the education of new researchers.
- Establish a universal framework guiding AI legislation, prioritizing human rights, dignity, equality, and equitable access to AI developments.

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

Improving the interrelationship between the different WSIS action lines

Journey to "Building Our Multistakeholder Digital Future" (UN DESA & IGF)

Thursday, 30 May 2024, 10:00-10:45

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/352

The Future of Digital Agriculture: Process for Progress (FAO)

Thursday, 30 May 2024, 11:00-11:45
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/349

Key Issues discussed

- The session aimed at capitalizing on the celebration of WSIS+20, showing with concrete examples that this anniversary has not only marked a decisive milestone for FAO in the common journey and the implementation of the Forum's original goal, towards building people-centric, inclusive, and development-oriented information and knowledge societies, but has also brought a unique opportunity to truly reflect on the achievements realized so far by all major stakeholders. It was the opportunity to set a sustainable way forward for FAO and its collaborators, for an ethical and safe use of ICTs in a landscape that is now more fast paced than ever with the emergence of new disruptive technologies such as AI, capitalizing on lessons learnt and best practices, built through joint efforts at the global level.
- Panelists showcased and discussed some of FAO's major contributions to WSIS in the realm of utilizing digital technologies to advance sustainable development and food security, eradicating hunger and poverty, as per the Organization's mandate.
- Those included over time:
    a. promoting digital technologies for agrifood systems transformation – with initiatives to harness mobile technology, remote sensing, geographic information systems (GIS), and other digital tools to support farmers in decision-making, crop management, and natural resource conservation-;
    b. developing knowledge sharing platforms and digital resources to facilitate the exchange of information and best practices among agricultural stakeholders;
    c. fostering capacity building -to enhance digital literacy and technical skills among farmers, extension workers, and agricultural professionals-;
    d. establishing the global E-Agriculture Community, as a collaborative platform for stakeholders to share knowledge and innovative solutions in using ICTs for agriculture and rural development-;
    e. providing policy support and technical assistance to governments and regional organizations in developing ICT policies and strategies for agricultural development; and finally, forging partnerships with other UN agencies, international organizations, academia, and civil society groups to advance the use of ICTs for agriculture within the broader context of sustainable development.

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

- Overall, FAO's initiatives in digital agriculture contribute directly, since Geneva 2003 and Tunis 2005, to the objectives of the WSIS Action Line C7, for which the Organization has been a facilitator since the Forum's early beginnings, by harnessing the potential of ICTs to drive innovation, efficiency, and sustainability in the agricultural sector, thereby advancing the broader goals of inclusive and sustainable development.
- Bringing forward and scaling up concrete examples of amplified use of digital tools, big data, artificial intelligence, coherent action and enabling mechanisms for strengthening digital capabilities, FAO aims at building on the Vision for WSIS Beyond 2015, towards 2025 and mark

progress towards also important UN led initiatives such as the Global Digital Compact and the Summit of the Future, strengthening its action on global digital collaboration.

- FAO aims at showcasing how, despite new challenges to tackle, in this revolutionary and historical period of new emerging technologies, that open new unknown horizons for all, the Organization can bring new solutions and build new partnerships. It considers and promotes the safe and ethical use of digital technologies, including AI, is now more than ever a critical component for accelerating the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development leaving no one behind, reaffirming the importance of WSIS Action Line 7 in a broader – although challenging- multi stakeholder context that need to be consolidated in a global governance framework.

Tangible outcomes (such as key achievements, announcements, launches, agreements, commitments, figures, and success stories)

- FAO has been successfully leveraging the transformative power of ICTs in the food and agriculture field, also utilizing WSIS as one of the processes highlighting the need for ICTs in agriculture, fostering innovation and development. The need to continue digital collaboration along these lines, building on WSIS lessons learnt and the platforms for dialogue that it provides at global level to harmonize policies, frameworks, standards and initiatives was well highlighted.
- FAO reaffirmed its commitment to scaling up digital solutions that can help in addressing the current food crisis by using new, highimpact, sustainable digital-based and data driven solutions and this includes embracing new technologies, such as generative AI, which has the potential, and with strong focus on safe and ethical way, to revolutionize agriculture by improving efficiency, productivity and sustainability, through enhanced data-driven decision-making, precision farming, resource management, climate adaptation and resilience of agrifood systems.
- This year, under the WSIS Prizes, FAO's Digital Services Portfolio (DSP) that was presented during the session has been recognized as WSIS Champion Project, under the category C7 E agriculture. This great achievement comes out of 1049 submitted projects in total, 360 nominations and more than 2M votes reviewed. This is an outstanding recognition of FAO's innovation in empowering farmers to transform agrifood systems and helping Members achieve the SDGs and FAO Four Betters, highlighting the Organization's key contributions to leveraging ICTs for societal challenges and inclusive sustainable development.

Actionable plan and key recommendations

- There is still a need for more interactive expert discussion on the impact on WSIS and its limitations/areas to improve, rethink or complement (e.g. with Digital Compact) and work less in silos. Major actors, including international organizations, should now think how WSIS shall evolve and be coherent with other initiatives at UN level (UN2.0, Global Digital Compact), for FAO more particularly from the perspective of agrifood systems' transformation.
- As the need to align with emerging technologies is now stronger than ever, we cant ignore the growing interest in AI, Big Data, and other emerging technologies, but we should continue advocating for guidance on their ethical use including in the food and agriculture sector. This does not entail only a technological shift but trigger a whole economic, social and cultural revolution where the relevant safeguards to make a strong and lastly impact on our agrifood systems, should be well implemented, ensuring food security thanks and within a digitally safe environment.

- We shall also remain committed to digital inclusion, particularly for women and youth, in the transformation of agrifood systems and keeping broader focus on digital technologies.
- Keeping abreast of the latest developments worldwide to best address the world's global challenges, through targeted interventions to reduce poverty, hunger and increase economic development, directly contributing to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGS) should always be done in a collaborative approach for stronger impact worldwide.

Suggestions for thematic aspects that might be included in the WSIS Forum 2025 (WSIS+20 Forum High-Level Event)

In the midst of the AI and digital revolution, we should continue highlighting the strong need to jointly develop ethical, safe and context-specific, digital capabilities for solutions that consider the unique needs and challenges of each region while striving for sustainable development worldwide and still being careful of still unknown risks. Governments, private sector, academia and civil society would need to work together to best catalyze new opportunities for furthering partnerships and better coordination of resources and to advance together in an inclusive way, concrete, integrated and targeted policies and actions to drive efficiently SDG transformation and the 2030 Agenda achievement, aligning on major UN led initiatives such as the SG Digital Cooperation Roadmap, the Global Digital Compact, the Summit of the Future.

WSIS Action Line C7 E-Science: Assessment of progress made over the last 20 years (UNESCO)

Thursday, 30 May 2024, 14:00-14:45

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/244

The Impact of Digitalisation and AI on Employment Quality – Challenges and Opportunities (ILO)

Thursday, 30 May 2024, 15:00-15:45

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/370

WSIS Action Line C7 E-environment: Milestones, challenges and future directions (ITU, WMO, UNEP)

Thursday, 30 May 2024, 15:00-15:45

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/495

WSIS Action Line C8: Key messages in preparation for the UNESCO MONDIACULT Conference in 2025 (UNESCO)

Friday, 31 May 2024, 10:00-10:45
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/189

Key Issues discussed

- **Impact of the digital transformation on the diversity of cultural expressions:** Rapid technological advances are outpacing policy responses, posing threats to cultural diversity, artistic freedom, and cultural rights.
- **Challenges posed by AI**: AI threatens human creativity, provokes job displacement, and raises issues of transparency on the use of cultural content and fair remuneration of artistic and creative work.
- **Economic and social rights of artists and cultural professionals**: Artists face challenges in securing fair remuneration and intellectual property protection in the digital environment, compounded by business models that favor benefit major transnational corporate players and rapid technological changes.
- **Linguistic diversity and discoverability**: There is an imbalance in the presence and visibility of cultural content in diverse languages online – including indigenous languages – with international content often overshadowing local content.
- **Protecting local content creation and distribution**: There is a need to strengthen policies and measures to support local content and linguistic diversity, including rethinking content quotas for digital platforms and promoting transparency in algorithmic content recommendation.

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

- **Guidance from normative instruments**: There is an increasing set of normative instruments, declarations, and reference documents to guide actions towards an inclusive, equitable, and sustainable digital ecosystem for the cultural and creative industries, including - but not limited to - the 2005 UNESCO Convention on the Protection and the Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, the 2021 UNESCO Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence, and the 2022 UNESCO MONDIACULT Declaration.
- **Opportunities in the digital environment**: There are opportunities to leverage digital technologies, including AI, to create new mediums for artistic inspiration and collaboration. Digital platforms can democratize access to cultural content and creation, allowing wider audiences to engage with a broad range of cultural expressions, potentially reducing barriers for underrepresented groups.
- **Support for local content quotas**: local content quotas should be implemented and rethought for digital platforms to ensure the visibility and sustainability of local cultural expressions.
- **Leveraging media and information literacy**: media and information literacy can be enhanced to support the effective provision of culture and arts education in the digital era, broadening access to digital technologies and creative tools.

Tangible outcomes (such as key achievements, announcements, launches, agreements, commitments, figures, and success stories)

- **Enhanced advocacy:** Advocacy conducted on the issues pertaining to the culture sector and the digital environment, including the impact of AI technologies on creativity, within the WSIS community, calling for the integration of cultural considerations into global discussions surrounding digital and AI technologies.
- **Conceptual framework**: Interlinkages between ICTs and the digital ecosystem and critical issues of cultural rights, creativity, and artistic freedom explored to guide human-centered solutions.
- **Global cultural policy discussion preparation**: Contribution in preparation of the global discussion on cultural policies to be held at the next MONDIACULT Conference, the international forum for Ministers of Culture, in 2025.

Actionable plan and key recommendations

- **Review of Action Line C8**: Assess the impact of digital transformation and the rise of artificial intelligence on the cultural sector and creative industries and adjust strategies accordingly.
- **Enhance stakeholder collaboration**: Foster increased collaboration between stakeholders in culture, creativity, and ICTs to address emerging challenges and opportunities.
- **Fair remuneration and inclusivity**: Ensure fair remuneration for artists and cultural professionals in the digital ecosystem while promoting linguistic diversity, enhancing content discoverability, maintaining transparency, and encouraging broad participation in cultural life.

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

Expanding the scope of Action Line C8 to encompass culture as a whole would be paramount, addressing pressing issues such as fair remuneration for content creators, ensuring decent working conditions, and safeguarding intellectual property rights. This expanded focus would enable comprehensive discussions on the intersection of technology and culture, fostering dialogue on how digital advancements can support the cultural sector while upholding the rights and livelihoods of those within it, and addressing the digital divide and equitable access.

WSIS Action Line C7 E-Health: Summary Report (WHO & ITU)

Friday, 31 May 2024, 11:00-11:45

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/389

WSIS ACTION LINES FACILITATORS MEETING

Friday, 31 May 2024, 14:00-15:00

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/323

INTERACTIVE SESSIONS

Mobilizing Collective Intelligence to Harness Innovation for Connectivity & Applications (World Summit Awards and Geneva Innovation Movement together with University of Geneva and ICNM)

Tuesday, 28 May 2024, 08:00-09:00

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/374

Global Initiative on Digital Health Multistakeholder Dialogue - Day 1 (WHO & ITU)

Tuesday, 28 May 2024, 09:00-17:00

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/382

Truth in the Digital Age: Combating Misinformation for a Thriving Digital Economy (DCO)

Tuesday, 28 May 2024, 09:00-09:45

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/521

CitiVerse: Envisioning Inclusive, Sustainable, and People-Centered Cities (ITU &WeGO)

Tuesday, 28 May 2024, 14:30-15:30
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/167

Key Issues discussed

The WSIS session on "CitiVerse: Envisioning Inclusive, Sustainable, and People-Centered Cities" covered various key topics and initiatives, including:

1. The role of the World Smart Sustainable Cities Organization (WeGO) in promoting smart technologies and sustainable practices within the CitiVerse initiative, showcasing Dhaka's exemplary use of digital tools and sustainable solutions to enhance livability and resilience.
2. An overview of the transformative potential of the metaverse, highlighting its ability to redefine urban environments, enhance connectivity, and generate significant economic value towards a people-centered CitiVerse.
3. ITU's activities in promoting sustainable digital transformation, data-driven urban planning, and fostering global collaboration among city stakeholders.
4. The importance of accessibility and inclusion in the metaverse and the potential of CitiVerse to create inclusive, sustainable, and people-centered urban environments.
5. The transformative potential of the CitiVerse in Korean cities, highlighting its ability to integrate physical and virtual worlds through a cyber-physical system (CPS) to enhance decision-making and augment reality.

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.

The WSIS session on "CitiVerse: Envisioning Inclusive, Sustainable, and People-Centered Cities" covered several important trends and developments, including:

- The use of metaverse technologies like AR, digital twins, and blockchain to enhance urban management and sustainability.
- The achievements of cities like Seoul, Shibuya, and Dubai in harnessing the metaverse for enhanced community engagement and economic growth.
- The potential of virtual spaces like the CitiVerse to offer unique opportunities for multi-stakeholder engagement and digital inclusion.
- The trend of using technologies like digital twins, integrated city operation platforms, and open city data hubs to enhance urban management and sustainability in Korean cities.

Tangible outcomes (such as key achievements, announcements, launches, agreements, commitments, figures, and success stories)

- Emphasized the potential of CitiVerse to generate significant global value by 2030, with projections of $5 trillion and the integration of the metaverse into daily activities for enhanced urban living.

- Highlighted the approval of deliverables by WG8 on Sustainability, Accessibility, and Inclusion, providing guidelines for building an accessible metaverse.
- Showcased Korea's achievements in deploying integrated city operation platforms across over 200 local governments and the establishment of an Open City Data Hub with a budget of 130 million dollars.

Actionable plan and key recommendations

- The session recommended continuous efforts to make the CitiVerse inclusive, sustainable, and people-centered by adopting universal design principles, ensuring digital access, and prioritizing cybersecurity.
- It is also recommended to foster collaboration among stakeholders to ensure universal accessibility standards in the metaverse.
- The session recommended to foster mechanisms for shared overarching goals to enable multi-department collaboration on developing inclusive, sustainable, and people-centered cities in the CitiVerse.

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

Recognizing the crucial role of local and subnational governments in developing and implementing digital policies, and the metaverse's impact on urban planning, digital inclusion, smart city technologies, community engagement, accessibility, sustainable development, multi-stakeholder partnerships, WSIS (or Member States) shall remain actively engaged with all aspects of the CitiVerse.

Advancing the GDC Principles and WSIS Action Lines (UN DESA & IGF)

Tuesday, 28 May 2024, 16:15-17:00

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/132

FAINANCE for GOOD (Geneva Agape Foundation and AInitiative)

Wednesday, 29 May 2024, 09:00-09:45

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/153

Harnessing AI for Sustainable Development Goals in the Arab Region (UNDP Egypt)

Wednesday, 29 May 2024, 9:00-9:45 AM
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/525

Key Messages:

- This multi stakeholders' session brought together panelists representing different players to discuss the common challenges and opportunities to utilize AI to advance SDGs in the Arab region. The panelists represented the government, the development organizations, the financial institutions, the private sector and international think tanks.

- The world and the Arab Region are significantly behind in achieving SDGs. AI will affect all SDGs with a high potential to make a difference for five: Good Health and Well-Being (SDG 3), Quality Education (SDG 4), Climate Action (SDG 13), Affordable and Clean Energy (SDG 7), and Sustainable Cities and Communities (SDG 11).

- Over the last decade, the Arab Region has experienced tremendous technological transformation and innovation. Many countries in the region took bold steps towards the development and deployment of AI. This various among countries with some countries managed to adopt cutting-edge technology, institutions, standards, and strategies to localize and utilize AI, while others are at early stages of developing their AI strategies.

- AI can be a game changer for the achievement of SDGs in the Arab Region, with the potential that the Middle East will gain 2% of AI's total global benefits in 2030, which is equivalent to $320 billion as estimated by PwC and a forecasted annual growth in the economic contribution of AI to reach between 20% and 34% per year.

- Egypt was presented as a case study with focus on:
  - Highlighting country's steady steps for AI development and deployment since 2019 with the establishment of the National Council for AI.
  - The Applied Innovation Center (AIC), which established in 2020 with the aim of Analyzing and solving national challenges, and delivering leading edge solutions using emerging ICT, in particular AI; and developing human capital through on-the-job training on real national challenges.
  - Presenting the AI applications developed and deployed by AIC across government institutions including at hospitals and courts. Other projects were highlighted such as the Arabic Language NLP systems with the potential of deployment in other Arab Countries.

- The Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) highlighted the contribution of the financial development organizations in digital transformation and AI, with focus on the challenge encountered in implementation and deployment in Arab countries.

- The private sector represented by CISCO highlighted its vision to develop stronger defense and remediation strategy for security threats and better application performance, and discussed how can public policy influence AI utilization for advancing the SDGs, brining good practices from the European Union.

- As an important stakeholder, the Digital Cooperation Organization (DCO) discussed what is needed to advance AI in the Arab region from the point of view of an international think tank with focus on capacity building.

Emerging trends, challenges, and opportunities in the implementation of the WSIS Action Lines to date

Challenges:

- Digital Divide: With the rapid increase of reliance on technology for providing e-public services and online access to information, the digital divide is a major concern due to the potential risk of increased social divides resulted from the inequalities in access to information due to disparities in technology diffusion.
- Qualified Human Resources: The lack of adequate capacity building programs, upskilling and reskilling, together with the pace of change in emerging technologies leads to the widening of the digital skills and technological gap.
- Security concerns: AI can be a game changer in advancing the progress towards SDGs, but it also poses complex security challenges and privacy concerns including misinformation and disinformation, and hacking.
- Responsible AI: AI strategies in the MENA region pays great attention to human resources and developing AI talent; and creating an enabling AI-friendly business environment, however similar attention should be paid to policies ensuring the responsible use of AI.

Opportunities

- Regional collaboration and knowledge sharing to address common challenges, including for example the development of Arabic Language NLP system and enhancing the Weak digital Arabic content, which is preventing the optimal use of AI systems, which depend on and learn from published digital content are of prime importance.
- Establish multi-stakeholder alliances and cooperation frameworks where the government develops the enabling environment for the private sector to develop and deploy the technologies.
- Create a regional framework for AI policy that prioritizes human rights, equality, and equitable access to AI advancements within the context of global frameworks.

How to ensure cultural and linguistic diversity in the digital and AI worlds? (UNESCO & Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie)

Wednesday, 29 May 2024, 09:00-09:45

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/291

Multistakeholder Dialogue on National Digital Health Transformation, 28-29 May 2024 (WHO & ITU)

Wednesday, 29 May 2024, 09:00-17:00

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/384

WSIS+20: Reclaiming a people-centered information society – priorities for the global South (Association for Progressive Communications)

Wednesday, 29 May 2024, 09:00-09:45

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/141

Blockchain and Biometric-based Digital Identity Solution (UNJSPF)

Wednesday, 29 May 2024, 10:00-10:45

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/366

Building an Enabling Environment for Indigenous, Rural and Remote Connectivity (Association for Progressive Communications, Rhizomatica and ITU-D Digital Inclusion)

Wednesday, 29 May 2024, 10:00-10:45
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/474

Key Issues discussed

- Enabling environments must be created for indigenous, rural and remote communities to access telecommunications services to strengthen their ways of life, cultures and territories.
- It is necessary to have a vision in which connectivity is only the starting point to achieve the real and meaningful insertion of digital tools in these communities. Therefore, it is also necessary to talk about access and accessibility from the design to the implementation of ICT processes.
- A fundamental part of these enabling environments is the creation of mechanisms for theses communities to generate their own communication projects and meaningful connectivity solutions, such as the community networks.
- For this type of community-owned projects to be successful and sustainable over time, it is necessary to work from a multi-stakeholder perspective on aspects such as capacity building, access to financial resources, relevant public policies and regulations, promotion of local content production and access to relevant information, etc.
- Capacity building and training for the deployment, maintenance and management of local meaningful connectivity solutions is fundamental, but strategies that accompany the subsequent implementation of the projects, such as micro-grants or mentoring, are required.

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.

- Spaces such as WSIS are strategic for connectivity, access and accessibility to telecommunications services in indigenous, rural and remote communities, as they allow for a multi-stakeholder discussion with a view to generating the necessary enabling environments to meet their communication needs.
- The WSIS+20 review process represents an important opportunity to strengthen communication processes and access to digital technologies in communities. However, strategies are required that allow real dialogue with the communities through the construction of spaces in their own spheres of discussion and collective decision-making.

Tangible outcomes (such as key achievements, announcements, launches, agreements, commitments, figures, and success stories)

- Community network initiatives around the world that have been supported and funded by the Internet Society.
- The Local Networks initiative (APC and Rhizomatica) for the creation of enabling environments for community networks in the global south.

- The Training Programme for ICT Network Managers in Indigenous and Rural Communities in Latin America, developed by ITU in collaboration with CSOs in the region, to be replicated in Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia Pacific.
- The study of connectivity and access conditions in different communities in the Amazon coordinated by Derechos Digitales.
- Different projects and initiatives of the Government of India to increase access to broadband and devices in rural areas of the country.

Actionable plan and key recommendations

- As a fundamental action to be developed in WSIS+20 review, we recommend the creation of a strategy of dialogue with indigenous communities, through the development of peer-topeer forums and documenting good practices.
- Review each of the current WSIS action lines to see how each has developed in the context of indigenous, rural and remote communities.

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

- Experiences of good practices in public policy for the promotion of complementary connectivity solutions.
- Necessary conditions for the accessibility of the diversity of people living in indigenous and rural communities.
- The creation of AI projects from indigenous communities

Digital Governance 3.0 (Fundação Getulio Vargas (Getulio Vargas Foundation) CyberBRICS Program)

Wednesday, 29 May 2024, 10:00-10:45

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/468

Digital inclusivity: Connecting the next billion (ICANN)

Wednesday, 29 May 2024, 10:00-10:45

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/145

Tackling AI Challenges: Multi-stakeholder collaboration for corporate accountability on ethical AI (WBA)

Wednesday, 29 May 2024, 10:00-10:45
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/174

Key Issues discussed

- Gaps in existing legal frameworks and institutional challenges in enforcing data protection laws in the context of AI development and implementation
- The role of digital technology companies in ensuring consideration of human rights (and impact assessment) in AI development and deployment; and equality and social rights
- The critical role of governments in ensuring compliance with AI regulations
- The need for capacity building among investors and civil societies on AI, upcoming and existing regulations for effective engagement with the private sector and policy makers

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

- Lack of allocation of adequate resources for ICT projects.
- Existence of digital divide. Many disadvantaged groups still do not have access to the ICTs.
- There is a need for more collaboration across different stakeholder groups to promote the holistic, smooth and sustainable digital transformation of any organization. There is also a need for more transnational and trans-organizational collaboration to leverage on each group's unique strengths and capacities for the good of all.

Tangible outcomes (such as key achievements, announcements, launches, agreements, commitments, figures, and success stories)

- Stakeholders agreed to embrace collaboration as an avenue to tackle challenges that come with emerging technologies.
- There is the need for capacity building among investors and civil societies on AI, upcoming and existing regulations for effective engagement with the private sector and policy makers

Actionable plan and key recommendations

There is a need for more collaboration across different stakeholder groups to promote the holistic, smooth and sustainable digital transformation of any organization. There is also a need for more transnational and trans-organizational collaboration to leverage on each group's unique strengths and capacities for the good of all.

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

- Universal access to the internet and digital skills
- Bridging the gender divide in digital inclusion
- Regulation of emerging technologies, specifically Artificial Intelligence
- Data protection and ethics in the digital age

The impact of technical standards on human rights in the case of digital technologies (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands)

Wednesday, 29 May 2024, 10:00-10:45
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/172

Key Issues discussed

Areas of ICT standards that create impact on human rights:

1. **Universal and meaningful connectivity.** Technical standards can dictate avenues for expanding internet access to regions that are currently not served or underserved. Standards and decisions on spectrum allocation should be designed to enable the proliferation of small and community networks.
2. *Censorship and surveillance on the internet.* In terms of security and privacy, the internet has changed in the last few years itself. Earlier, internet service providers and any intermediary network device or service could easily say what website a user was trying to access. Work at the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF) has tried to encrypt portions of the Domain Name System, and strengthened the Secure Hypertext Transfer Protocol (HTTPS) to prevent that. Engagement with human rights considerations work focuses on trying to reduce the scope and extent of personal information that is available to private actors and consequently governments – shrinking the possibility of censorship and surveillance.
3. **Data-intensive technologies, especially those using artificial intelligence, machine learning and biometric technologies.** Here, standards govern the life cycle of AI systems, including but not limited to how models will be trained, and the transparency required of such systems.
4. **Diversity:** Many of these aforementioned issues only affect groups who are under-represented in standards bodies. It is of importance that the process of standard development is inclusive and open to meaningful participation of all stakeholders, including those representing marginalized communities or persons in vulnerable situations.

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

*   6) Enabling environment & 11) International and regional cooperation
    *   Technical standards regulating digital technologies can generate human rights impacts in several ways, which have yet to be fully examined and understood. Specific design decisions within technical standards-setting processes may facilitate the exercise or enjoyment of human rights, while fostering development and innovation in the digital landscape.
    *   However, certain standards may also have a negative impact on human rights, depending on how they are designed and implemented. There is therefore a pressing need to consider how standards can be used to address issues relating to new and emerging technologies such as AI systems, particularly with respect to embedded biases that lead to or facilitate discriminatory outcomes, or interfere with the rights to freedom of opinion, expression, privacy, and effective remedy.

- There are also unique challenges facing a variety of actors as they seek to engage in and shape standard-setting processes. While states, businesses and standard setting organisations play a primary role, there is a clear need for civil society and human rights experts to provide their perspectives and ensure that technical expertise is complemented by human rights considerations. Without these nuanced perspectives, there is a potential danger that proposals for standardisation relating to artificial intelligence may lead to standards which systematically undermine the rights-enabling properties of these technologies.
- Ongoing challenges remain for underrepresented stakeholders such as small businesses, global south States and civil society organisations who have some combination of struggles to: prioritise and sustain long term engagement, gain access to multilateral fora, acquire talent and develop necessary expertise. It's important to note most global fora discussions are conducted in English and move at a pace that is out of alignment with the need to build coalitions.
- Successful models of linking human rights and technical standards include the Human Rights Protocol Considerations Group at the Internet Research Task Force.

Tangible outcomes (such as key achievements, announcements, launches, agreements, commitments, figures, and success stories)

- The FOC will be hosting strategic discussions and capacity building opportunities for stakeholders to explore how to advance human rights in technical standard-setting for digital technologies.
- The FOC also plans to issue a joint statement on human rights and technical standards for digital technologies.
    - As part of the implementation of the statement, the FOC plans to host an IGF session which will aim to further the discussions and explore how governments, civil society, private sector, academia and technical community can work together to ensure human rights considerations are effectively integrated into technical standard setting processes.

Actionable plan and key recommendations

- The OHCHR's report on "Human rights and technical standard-setting processes for new and emerging digital technologies" provides a set of recommendations for the effective integration of human rights considerations into technical standard-setting processes.
- Governments should abstain from endorsing standards that could potentially infringe on human rights.Governments should maintain their human rights obligations when delegating regulatory functions to standard-setting bodies and to support civil society's capacity to contribute effectively and independently to standard-setting processes. This approach underscores the pivotal role of governments in ensuring that the development and implementation of technical standards are conducted with a steadfast commitment to upholding human rights.
- The importance of including all stakeholders in these discussions, in a multi-disciplinary way, especially human rights experts, should be recognised by governments and standard-setting organisations.
- Standard-setting organisations should be open, transparent, and inclusive, ensuring their operations align with human rights standards.
    - Meaningful openness to participation includes public documentation of meetings, discussions, decisions, drafts and final documents. Other tactics to improve participation include: systems to welcome new participants; clear codes of conduct;

> proactive outreach to participants in underrepresented areas; mentorship programs; funding support for engagement and travel.

- Standard-setting organisations should fully commit to the application of international human rights law, standards and principles, using human rights methodologies, and to being accountable for implementing that commitment.
- Private sector organisations should, while engaging in standard-developing processes, respect human rights obligations as outlined in the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, including with regard to the impact of the standards on the use of digital technologies.

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

As per the WSIS Action Lines and the Roadmaps for implementing them, the 2025 WSIS Forum should include discussions with all stakeholders on the importance of integrating human rights considerations and adopting a human rights-based approach to the entire lifecycle of (emerging) digital technologies. This also applies to the technical standard development process and the impact of standards.

AI and Global Challenges: Ethical Development and Responsible Deployment (CCIT, CAST, EC MEDICI Framework, ICT Watch – Indonesia, Jaipuria Institute of Management Noida, Kamusi Project International, Virtual Activism & Loughborough University)

Wednesday, 29 May 2024, 11:00-12:00
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/199

Key Issues discussed

- Cyber Ethics AI & ML - Ethical Artificial Intelligence (safety, fairness, transparency, accountability, and respect for human values)
- Cyber Tech deployment in the Global South: private, ethical, secure, transparent, open and sustainable
- AI for Society Engagement (people who have no control over them and no possibility to opt out, regional and industrial imbalances, exacerbating inequality, bias and discrimination, spreading disinformation)
- Cyber Content, AI and ML built on top of western cultural model. Need for local content, AI and ML?
- Improving awareness and participation in the entire process
- Enterprise AI Governance (data engineering, model engineering, and domain engineering)
- Ethical AI in education and healthcare
- AI robust regulatory framework based on a human rights framework (AI for Good / AI for Bad)

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

- Improving role of Cyber Ethics, C.E. experts as part of design teams, Ethical by design
- Extension of LLM to a broad range of languages
- Innovative LLM based solutions
- Openness of LLMs technology

Tangible outcomes (such as key achievements, announcements, launches, agreements, commitments, figures, and success stories)

- Establishment of tight cooperation among panellist's organizations
- Establishment of awareness raising programs and workshops re AI esp in the global south
- Monitoring the uses of AI in warfare, conflict, and human rights abuses

Actionable plan and key recommendations

- Establishment of global Special Interest Group on ethical development and responsible deployment of AI and ML
- Establishment of an AI industry application expert symposium

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

How to remove biases in machine learning models that could potentially discriminate against under-represented groups.

Citizens are increasingly using AI "bots" to carry out different activities ranging from writing a poem to creating a deep fake. How can we identify a human "product" from a machine product? Potential IPR problems? "Local content" will be soon generated by "local" bots? The disappearance of "minoritized intelligences"

AI is increasingly being applied across various industries, with each industry being affected to different extents. The opportunities and challenges vary significantly. How to better integrate AI applications into different sectors, enhance the development and ethical standards of industry applications, will become an important topic.

Community Media Network: Envisioning the future (ICT4D Collective, ACORAB/CIN; Bangladesh NGOs Network for Radio and Communication, Tac-Together, Cape Town TV & CEMCA.

Wednesday, 29 May 2024, 11:00-11:45
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/331

Key Issues discussed

The following key issues were discussed:
- Key development in community radio since the original WSIS meetings in 2003 and 2005.
- Community radio's special success in providing information to some of the most isolated and marginalised communities. It is important to note that with two way communication (by phone of post), community radio can also be interactive.
- The important shifts taking place towards community media (not just radio), and the challenges (and costs) of shifting towards digital modalities of delivery
- Community radio plays a particularly important role in emergencies (floods, earthquakes, and war)
- Need for guidance on good practices (especially in digitalisation) that can be shared with those without such expertise

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

- Much has been achieved in community radio within the context of Action Line C9 over the last 20 years; much remains to be done.
- It is essential to understand the needs of different audiences and ensure that programmes and content are delivered in ways and on topics that appeal to these audiences.
- Community radio has proved to be especially vauable in disaster contexts (as in Nepal earthquake in April 2015) and also for eaching isolated communities.
- It is essential that high quality training resources are made available so that good practices can be shared, especially in how radio networks can update to digital provision.
- There is serious competition from commercial media and "digital giants", and community tradio stations and networks need to find new sustainable business models to survive.

Tangible outcomes (such as key achievements, announcements, launches, agreements, commitments, figures, and success stories)

- In India, the National Institute for Disaster Management is well aware of the use of community radio during landslides, earthquakes, cyclones and floods , and proposals are well underway for the creation of a network of 250 community radio stations to serve the 7500 kms of India's coastline.
- In Bangladesh, BNNRC has won several awards, including the UN World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) Prize 2016 and recognition as a Champion for Media Development and Digital Transformation. BNNRC has been hosting the Secretariat of the Bangladesh Internet Governance Forum since 2006 and the Bangladesh Initiative for Unified Voices on the Global Digital Compact and UN Summit of the Future since 2022.

- In Nepal, ACORAB is the umbrella organisation for 360 community radio stations spread across the length and breadth of gthe country, and broadcasts in 70 languages, especially in isolated rural areas without other connectivity.
- The Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development has a long history and wide network across the world sharing good practces in community media, and welcomes delegates to the 19th Asia Media Summt in September 2024

Actionable plan and key recommendations

- Community media have a key role to play in empowering isolated and marginalied communities, especially in the contexts of social cohesion and disaster management
- Governments, with support and advice from relevant international agencies, should prioritse actions and licensing regimes to enable them to benefit from the potential to enhance their services through the adoption of the latest digital technologies.

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

There could be exciting potential in encouraging those working on Action Lines C8 (Cultural diversity and identity, linguistic diversity and local content) and C9 (Media) to convene a joint set of sessions addressing the important synergies between them.

The Final Frontier: Emerging Tech and Space Economy for Sustainable Earth (Fundação Getulio Vargas (Getulio Vargas Foundation) CyberBRICS Program)

Wednesday, 29 May 2024, 11:00-11:45

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/466

Towards the WSIS+20 Review: Driving technical community engagement (Canadian Internet Registration Authority)

Wednesday, 29 May 2024, 11:00-11:45
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/198

Key Issues discussed

- The role and importance of technical community engagement in the Global Digital Compact (GDC) and the upcoming WSIS+20 Review;
- The contribution of ICANN's WSIS+20 Outreach Network as one such initiative;
- The possibilities and potential of technical community coordination vis-à-vis coalition-building;
- How technical operators can effectively engage with key government representatives on these issues;
- The key outcomes from the NETmundial+10 conference and its potential impact on the GDC and WSIS+20 Review.

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

- Threats to the multistakeholder model of internet governance;
- Increased interest and engagement in related processes by the technical community;
- The gap in terms of coordination and collaboration amongst technical community members in engaging on these issues;
- Evidence of the impact and influence of the Internet Governance Fourm (IGF) as a key and durable convenor of the multistakeholder community;
- Creative thinking around how the IGF can be used in the follow-up and review of the GDC.

Tangible outcomes (such as key achievements, announcements, launches, agreements, commitments, figures, and success stories)

- Visibility for the recently launched "Technical Community Coalition for Multistakeholderism";
- Increased awareness of ICANN's WSIS Outreach Network;
- Information-sharing about the NETmundial+10 outcomes and their potential for impact;
- Knowledge-sharing with respect to tactics technical operators can use to engage with relevant government representatives.

Actionable plan and key recommendations

- Government representatives should actively engage with technical operators in the lead-up to and during the WSIS+20 Review;
- Technical operators should work together to maximize impact and influence.

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

Like the 2024 iteration, the WSIS Forum 2025 should again feature the theme "digital governance processes". In particular, it should solicit participation in the Forum and this thematic track from members of the technical community. The Forum should also encourage sessions not strictly on the outcomes of these processes but how and where stakeholder groups can get involved.

Unlocking Africa's Digital Entrepreneurship Potential: Insights from the Tech Hub Landscape post-Covid (UN International Trade Centre)

Wednesday, 29 May 2024, 11:00-11:45
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/309

Key Issues discussed

1. Challenges related to reduced access to funding and grants are prominent, highlighting the need for supportive financial mechanisms to sustain technology hubs. COVID-19 highlighted these weaknesses.
2. On a positive note, COVID-19 revealed the strength of the community building role of tech hubs. Knowledge sharing is an essential part of the tech hub culture in Africa, especially during COVID-19 where we saw for instance the resurgence of HealthTech.
3. Concerns about imported narratives within tech hubs and the need to reshape these narratives to better reflect and support African realities. There is a kind of 'American (Silicon Valley) dream' being offered to entrepreneurs in Africa and elsewhere that overlooks local realities.
4. Conducting needs assessments to better target funding and resources is something that is important in today's African tech hub landscape.

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

- In terms of Emerging Trends, we see a massive, global rise in AI, big data, cryptocurrencies, distributed ledger technologies and the Internet of Things (IoT) impacting WSIS stakeholders. These technologies hold immense potential for development but raise concerns around privacy, security, and ethical use.
- Challenges abound: the digital divide persists, with unequal access to affordable and reliable infrastructure and skills. Cybersecurity threats are growing, and ensuring online safety remains a challenge. Additionally, the environmental impact of ICT needs to be addressed, especially with its exponential growth due to the hardware and computing requirements generated by AI.
- Achievements: significant progress has been made in increasing internet penetration rates globally. Multi-stakeholder collaboration through the WSIS Forum has fostered knowledge sharing and best practices.
- Opportunities abound too: the continued growth of mobile broadband and accelerated increase of smartphone penetration offer new avenues for bridging the digital divide, particularly in developing countries. Open access initiatives and digital literacy programs can empower individuals and communities.
- WSIS beyond 2025: the WSIS+20 review process is an opportunity to refine the Action Lines for the evolving digital landscape and align them directly with the SDGs – actually, a bold but sensible move would be to merge them.

Tangible outcomes (such as key achievements, announcements, launches, agreements, commitments, figures, and success stories)

- The Tech Hubs report : Tech Hubs in Africa: Accelerating start-ups for resilient growth - 3rd Edition | ITC (intracen.org)
- The NTF V program : Netherlands Trust Fund – Phase V – Agribusiness and Digital Technology | ITC (intracen.org)

Actionable plan and key recommendations

- Creating any more tech hubs is not sustainable as Africa is already oversaturated with those. Invest in and mobilize those already existing.
- There should be a systemic reconfiguration of the way funding is sought, in order to address current issues.
- Policy makers should focus on developing affordable internet access and infrastructures, revising curriculum to match industry needs, and enhancing leadership within tech hubs to drive growth and innovation.

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

From an SME perspective, thematic aspects for the WSIS Forum 2025 could focus on leveraging ICT to enhance competitiveness and navigate the digital economy. This could include workshops on e-commerce strategies, cybersecurity measures for small businesses, and utilizing AI tools for marketing and communication. The forum could also address challenges faced by SMEs, such as access to financing for digital transformation and navigating complex regulatory environments.

Enabling responsible development, deployment and use of AI and digital ecosystems (EY)

Wednesday, 29 May 2024, 14:00-14:45

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/248

How African knowledge and wisdom can inspire the development and governance of AI (Kenya Permanent Mission to the UN in Geneva, DiploFoundation & Geneva Internet Platform)

Wednesday, 29 May 2024, 14:00-14:45

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/239

New Normal: are we ready for it? (EC MEDICI Framework)

Wednesday, 29 May 2024, 14:00-14:45 PM
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/238

Key Issues discussed

- Digital Transformation, Discrimination, Cybersecurity, Digital Fragility
- Cultural Identity and mainstream content and global AI
- Digital World Governance, Access, Presence, ...
- Socio-Economic Inclusivity
- Cyber Ethics, AI potential biases, and Human Rights
- Meta Reality Side Effects, Cyber Bubbles, Cyber Isolation
- Digital World: Sustainability and Environment
- AI and ML Challenges

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

- AL2 & 3: Digital World Governance, Inclusivity, Access, Accessibility, Affordability, Online Presence, Awareness, Open Science.
    - Re-crossing the Digital Divide through international aid and regional governance
    - Maintaining choices for users / potential users who don't can't always choose the newest, most expensive, or most technologically sophisticated devices.
    - Maintaining choices for users who do not have, or do not want, to connect only to nationally provided networks
- AL7: Cyber world: sustainability, ICT waste disposal, AI ML role in disaster recovery
- AL8: Cultural Identity: young generations trained by mainstream content v/s minoritizes, global AI v/s local AI (e.g. eastern AI, western AI, global south AI)
- AL10: Improving role of Cyber Ethics, C.E. experts as part of design teams, Ethical by design, potential risk to release humans from personal ethical analysis and related responsibilities.

Tangible outcomes (such as key achievements, announcements, launches, agreements, commitments, figures, and success stories)

- Improving awareness
- Risk assessment
- Interdisciplinary analysis of mid- long- term impacts (technology/humanities)
- Set up SIG Cyber Impacts
- Foster the cooperation on Cyber Ethics

Actionable plan and key recommendations

- Establish a cyber impacts SIG and related observatory
- Foster cooperation between technology / humanities
- Extended panel outcome document to be published by a specific scientific magazine

- Research the use of alternatives, to maintain users' personal, and regional choices and affordability
- Risk recursion and rise as a caveat to currently discussed international agreements.

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

On WSIS 2025 we recommend setting up an Interdisciplinary session on actual and future emerging technologies and their impacts on Society. In addition, due to the actual relevant potential impact, we suggest establishing a Special Interest Group on the implementation and use of AI and ML to track the effective outcomes of the dissemination of these technologies in our daily life. On the sustainability side, it will be useful to activate an observatory on the recycling process and waste disposal of ICTs "garbage". Same as Actionable Plan above: Research the use of alternatives, to maintain user choices and affordability.

The Future of News Media: AI, Revenues Models, and Democracy (The UN Brief)

Wednesday, 29 May 2024, 14:00-14:45

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/250

The Importance of the quality of information an the fight against fake news and alternative information (Association Africa 21)

Wednesday, 29 May 2024, 14:00-14:45

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/233

Connecting the Unconnected in the field of Education Excellence, Cyber Security & Rural Solutions and Women Empowerment in ICT (CMAI Association of India)

Wednesday, 29 May 2024, 15:00-15:45

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda?cb=6092#agenda

Electricity for ICT in the 21st century (International Electrotechnical Commission)

Wednesday, 29 May 2024, 15:00-15:45
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/284

Key Issues discussed

The session focused on the technological and environmental factors driving a shift in the fundamental ways we think of electricity, and how can we leverage these for ICT.

The discussions drew attention to Direct Current (DC) based infrastructure as a solution to reduce energy wastage drastically. The interactive discussion raised several issues in relation to the technology trends:

- Integration with renewables, less wasteful and cost-effective: Today: we are living in a DC world – Renewables like solar PV, wind and marine energy, hydropower, all produce DC that can be used directly by batteries, electronics, sensors, EVs without losing power in conversion from DC to AC to DC. This makes DC less wasteful and more cost-effective.
- Electricity access: DC offers easier energy access off-grid, and so technologies like LVDC (Low-Voltage Direct Current) can be especially useful in developing countries, as it provides affordable and sustainable electricity access to people who would otherwise have to wait many years for a connection to the main electricity grid.
- Connectivity to internet and ICT: As a direct result it will also allow more people to get connected to the internet.
- Avoiding/reducing e-waste: We can avoid a lot of the e-waste for the converters used by mobile phones and PCs, data centres and more.
- Role of standards: The IEC has developed the international standards that make DC safe and usable everywhere. These standards were developed in a systems committee that involved people from many different backgrounds. This cooperation helped accelerate the usability of DC – we had more than 100 years to make AC safe and usable. Now DC could become the baselevel solution, a golden thread that will help address many of the challenges we have with electricity generation and use.

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

- The session "Electricity for ICT in the 21st century" aligned with conversations around transitioning towards a more efficient Information and Communication Infrastructure (C2). Emerging trends in the electricity world indicate there is a need for streamlining efficiency efforts. Integration with renewable energy sources, reducing wastage and increasing electricity access are drivers that contribute to the trends leaning towards DC (Direct Current) based infrastructure. DC technologies are emerging as key proponents for advancing energy efficiency, electricity access and ICT operations. Naturally, electricity access goes hand in hand with increasing ICT reach, thus furthering solutions that impact almost all domains of our lives - education, healthcare, finance and more.

- The session brings to light how governments, international bodies and regulators can work together to accelerate meaningful change in the emerging future of electricity.
- Such a technology brings with it opportunities in international cooperation for the role of governments and all stakeholders in promotion of ICT for development (C1), enabling environment (C6), access to information and knowledge (C3) and having diverse stakeholders in inclusive approaches (C8).

Tangible outcomes (such as key achievements, announcements, launches, agreements, commitments, figures, and success stories)

- **Launched** the IEC International Summit on LVDC on 5-6 November in the Netherlands.
- **Plan to integrate** feedback from audience into discussions within the IEC Systems Committee on LVDC, responsible for steering the international standardization activities in the area.
- **Promoted** awareness of electricity standards and its impact.

Actionable plan and key recommendations

- Given the needs and emerging trends, the energy infrastructure needs to eventually shift to a DC based infrastructure to increase energy efficiency (and reduce energy wastage) and enable further electricity access.
- It will take time, but IEC is leading efforts to make LVDC technology safe for use everywhere where DC power can be used directly without losses in energy conversion.
- There is need for international collaboration and cooperation to accelerate our efforts towards the goal of a more sustainable energy infrastructure.

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

Energy is a key driver for human progress, and the intricate web of ICT infrastructure relies implicitly on this vital resource. As we forge ahead with ICT development and innovation, we must harmonize it with the imperative of building an energy-efficient infrastructure that acknowledges the shared global challenges we confront. While we saw invigorating discussions around this topic already in WSIS 2024, it would be good to have a more cohesive thematic stream for the (need for an) evolving energy infrastructure.

Promoting age-friendly digital technologies collaboration and innovation for an inclusive information society (Internet Society of China, China Academy of Information and Communications Technology)

Wednesday, 29 May 2024, 15:00-15:45

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/275

Sharing business perspectives on the road to the WSIS+20 review (ICC)

Wednesday, 29 May 2024, 15:00-15:45

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/209

The Era of Spatial Computing (World XR)

Wednesday, 29 May 2024, 15:00-15:45

Please find the session details here:

https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/252

Unlocking Multistakeholder Cooperation within the UN System: Global Partnership for Open Internet (European Union)

Wednesday, 29 May 2024, 15:00-15:45
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/256

Key Issues discussed

- [Why] The importance of putting the multistakeholder governance model at the center of decision-making processes related to the Open Internet principles within the UN system. Intersecting forces at UN level require collective effort to ensure that all parts of the multistakeholder ecosystem are involved in the discussion. According to Global IGF 2023 statistics, only 14% of participants came from technical communities, while the private sector accounted for 37%. Also, only 8% were original from African countries, and 7% from the Latin American and Caribbean region. The multistakeholder approach it is not a complementary mechanism to guarantee that certain demands and perspectives are channeled to the intergovernmental policy processes on Internet governance. Rather, multistakeholderism needs to be the means, ways, and goals of any Internet governance process.

- [How: engagement methods during processes] The methods to effectively set multistakeholderism into motion are currently existing. However, there is a need to operationalize more practical, consistent, sustained instruments, approaches and lines of engagement which lead stakeholders to participate with inclusivity, equal terms, durability, continuity, feasibility, and agility in their participation. Beyond open consultations, ad hoc participation and the establishment of working groups where diverse perspectives are publicly showcased, stakeholders should be part of processes throughout all phases. First, since early stages: in the agenda-setting phase, and the policy co-design of governance models. Second, in the policy formulation stage and mostly in priority-setting negotiations-, by making sure that there is meaningful representation of all sectors and from different regions. Third, in the follow-up and review, stakeholders might assess the impact of outcomes on their sectors to provide policy recommendations on further next steps. Also, time windows for inputs should be broadened.

- [How: capacity-building before and after decision-making processes] Stakeholders have different capacities, workforce, knowledge, financial resources, expertise and sensitivities to participate in international processes on Internet governance. Stakeholder sectors differ in these resources, but also within the same stakeholder sector, some organizations may have wider capabilities than others (e.g. regional organizations that are capable to channel the demands from a wider network of smaller NGOs or small- and medium-sized companies). By acknowledging these differences (inter-sector and intra-sector), speakers highlighted the need to focus on the following lines of work. First, capacity-building and -development, with training programs, staff exchanges, workshops, or foundational papers. Second, especially vulnerable or ill-equipped organizations should be offered resources to have administrative and financial capacity for travel. • [How: incentives] Stakeholders have different capacities and resources, but also different incentives to join Internet governance processes. Governments and UN agencies should 1 encourage their stakeholders to participate in these sessions, while also helping them have the resources to do so in a consistent and sustained fashion.

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

- Operationalization of guidelines to help the implementation of the Open Internet principles with a truly effective multistakeholder approach, as the interventions from several members from the High-Level Executive Committee from NetMundial+10 highlighted on the São Paulo Guidelines.
- Improvement of transparency and accountability, as shown by Global IGF's reflections on improving their multistakeholder engagement approach.

Tangible outcomes (such as key achievements, announcements, launches, agreements, commitments, figures, and success stories

- The European Commission has just launched the CADE project, aimed at providing capacity development programs for civil society organizations in developing countries. Also, the European Commission is the largest donor to the SDG Digital Acceleration Agenda. In July 2023, the EU contributed 30 million euro to the Digital Transformation Window of the Joint SDG Fund for its implementation phase 2022-2025. The Joint SDG und is an inter-agency, pooled mechanism for integrated policy support and strategic financing.
- The International Telecommunications Union (ITU) showcased the Partner2Connect Digital Coalition, a multi-stakeholder alliance to advance universal meaningful connectivity, that has just announced USD 4.8 billion dollars in investment commitments during the WSIS+20 Forum HighLevel Event. These commitments will focus on affordability and adoption in the hardest-toconnect areas in some countries and for people with disabilities, among others.
- Internet Society (ISOC) showcased the results from their "Connecting the Unconnected" Program, by which they provide grants to help local communities build Community Networks, and how to build, main and support these networks. So far, they have supported 53 community networks.
- The Digital Impact Alliance (DIAL) has updated the Principles for Digital Development, and has launched the Charter for Digital Public Goods. As an example of country-level implementation, it has partnered with Sierra Leone's government to prepare the National Digital Development Policy.
- The B-Tech Project at the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) is committed to building responsible business conduct in the technology sector since 2019 with due diligence principles, proposals for risk mitigation or remedies to victims in case of technology-related harms. They do also have two sister projects in Africa and India.
- The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) showed their commitment to bringing solutions to the country level. Their Digital Development Compass is the world's largest database of digital development data, which aggregates and synthesizes over 180 public data sources.

Actionable plan and key recommendations

- Development of localized capacity development projects, as highlighted by the EU, and increasing investment commitments by private companies into UN agencies' alliances.
- Further engagement with NGOs that may provide grassroots case studies on the impact of Internet governance processes into socioeconomic rights, such as gender and environment.

- Need to have further discussions on how to connect with local organizations that will unlikely have enough resources to participate and/or contribute to international processes. Potential partnership with regional organizations with wider networks in their neighborhood.
- Multistakeholder engagement should be well-reflected in the GDC and WSIS+20 process. It constitutes the hallmark of global discussion on Internet governance and digital cooperation.

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

The multistakeholder engagement needs to go beyond the "consultative approach" (ad hoc participation, delivery of inputs after the policy formulation stage). A fully whole-of-the-process perspective should be promoted, from early stages of agenda- and priority-setting, to policy formulation, and further follow-up. This approach must be central to UN debate on Internet governance and digital cooperation. Also, the notion of digital trust is limitedly addressed in the WSIS Action Lines and in the Global Digital Compact (which pinpoints the need to have "technical trust", but does not address "policy trust" in the processes and involved stakeholders). Moreover, localized capacity development projects with civil society organizations (CSOs) are an opportune pathway to guarantee practice-oriented solutions in a collaborative way between governments and supranational organizations such as the European Union, jointly with UN agencies, and the multistakeholder community. This would lead to CSOs with greater ownership and potentially larger participation in international Internet governance processes.

WSIS Action Lines: Why they are still relevant? (The Atlantic Council)

Wednesday, 29 May 2024, 15:00-15:45

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/263

Building confidence and security in connected IT systems (IFIP Technical Committee 11)

Wednesday, 29 May 2024, 16:00-16:45

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/280

Consolidation and Standardization needs in International and Global Governance (The OneGoal Initiative for Governance)

Wednesday, 29 May 2024, 16:00-16:45
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/290

Key Issues discussed

- The points in thELECTe process where consolidation intervenes.
- Temporal aspects of measurement as impacting the incompleteness of knowledge and more.
- Conservation of items "discarded" during consolidation.
- An optimal that would be the result of a scientific research vs/as relates to a standard.

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.

- C3 access to information and knowledge: on the one hand, technologies that are key to sovereignty, chiefly quantum, remain hard or become harder to access in terms of deeper education. On the other hand the incompleteness of knowledge at decisions point is not properly addressed, and AI doesn't facilitate this.
- C4 capacity building: some of the point for C3 applies to C4.
- C5 building confidence and security in the use of ICTs: cybersecurity is on an arms race route, which summons more and more resources and this is set to reach some shape of breaking point whereby quantum is an important factor, which leads to whole new set of issues.
- C6 enabling environment: consumer protection fails, intellectual property is on an exploitative track. 1
- C8 cultural diversity is being paradoxically lost in the inclusion movement. People become homogenous, language becomes English, cultures become some assigned affiliation that one merely commemorates.
- C9 media: through a shrinking of the size of groups reached on social media and the possibility of surgical control of who or what message reaches whom, it becomes harder to for non-mainstream positions to be heard.
- C10 ethical dimensions of the Information Society: failing despite the number of efforts on this theme.
- C11 international and regional cooperation: geopolitics taints all action lines.

Tangible outcomes (such as key achievements, announcements, launches, agreements, commitments, figures, and success stories)

- Partnership between the Lausanne Research Institute and the OneGoal Initiative for Governance.
- Explored a few non-obvious issues about measurement, looping frequency, environmental impact of ICTs as well as inherent risks stemming from ICT structures, consistency of subsystems and of the system.
- More consideration of risk recursion in the metrology community, especially in considering digitalization issues in measurement traceability.

Actionable plan and key recommendations

- A further exploration of this to pinpoint implementable standardisation options.
- Exploration of the localisation of RRE.

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

- Systems thinking
- Incompleteness of knowledge and lack of standardisation as a barrier to effective policymaking

Fostering hybrid curriculum for inclusive learning environments (UNESCO-International Bureau of Education)

Wednesday, 29 May 2024, 16:00-16:45
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/276

Key Issues discussed

- The implementation of hybrid learning in two different contexts in Europe and West Africa
- Challenges and innovations across e-learning, pedagogy and assessment
- Integrating technology with in-person instruction and developing blended systems to cater to diverse student needs
- Open-source resources and their various applications in the public domain in Europe – for citizens and students

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

- The major challenges continue to be connectivity and the digital divide (40% of Africans do not have electricity)
- Preparation of national education systems for resilience in the face of stresses due to the climate crisis and rising civil unrest is essential to ensure continuity of learning – access to information and knowledge, through e-learning, and capacity development
- E-learning continues to improve across Africa, contributing to better quality and access to education - despite the vast digital divide yet to be resolved.
- Support for teachers needs to be improved, as COVID proved that the social aspect of school is still critical for healthy youth populations.

Tangible outcomes (such as key achievements, announcements, launches, agreements, commitments, figures, and success stories)

- The session shared the initial phase of UNESCO-IBE's flagship initiative Hybrid Education Learning and Assessment and presented the second upcoming phase
- Successful implementation of e-learning/hybrid practices in Europe were given as models to be upscaled/replicated elsewhere

Actionable plan and key recommendations

- UNESCO-IBE will continue to provide capacity development to Member States on the integration into national curriculum and roll-out of hybrid and e-learning solutions
- Support to teachers needs to be fit for purpose and context and the UNESCO-IBE approach on curriculum frameworks on this aspect will continue to evolve and improve as part of our offer to Member States.

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

There is seemingly a disproportionate amount of interest in tech innovations that advance economic possibility, without taking into account the environmental and equality concerns that are universal priorities. More innovations are not necessarily the answer until we get the fundamental structures of equitable, quality education right.

Technical recommendations for WSIS:

- The registration process was time-consuming and off-putting for potential participants. Other conferences have a much simpler online process to join for hybrid participation, where an individual zoom link is allocated to individual sessions.
- Translation is necessary for all meetings.
- The instructions for session organisers did not correspond to the actual reality of the rooms. For example, we were told to bring laptops. When we arrived we were told to use a usb drive to load onto the central laptop, which was contradictory.
- There was a noticeable absence of youth participation in this WSIS meeting. Can there be greater youth consultation and participation in this event rather than a rather narrow age and demographic.

How to swiftly bridge the urban-rural digital gap with Solution BIRD (Global Plan Inc., Japan)

Wednesday, 29 May 2024, 16:00-16:45

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/282

The Future of AI in the Judiciary: Launch of the UNESCO Survey on the Use of AI by Judicial Operators (UNESCO)

Wednesday, 29 May 2024, 16:00-16:45
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/363

Key Issues discussed

- Even with the increase in adoption of artificial intelligence (AI) tools by judicial operators growing, there is minimal to no formal guidance on adequately using these tools for individuals or organizations in the justice sector.
- The session thus aimed to discuss the challenges and opportunities for the use of AI in the Judiciary as well as the human rights implications of AI that the judiciary must be prepared to address.
- In addition, the results of the UNESCO Survey on the Use of AI by Judicial Operators were launched and discussed with a look to gather contributions from the audience and panelists in shaping the Guidelines for the Use of AI Systems in Courts and Tribunals.

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

- The session was concerned with WSIS Action Line C4 (Capacity Building) and C5 (Building confidence and security in the use of ICTs). The discussion looked at the ways that the judiciary can use AI tools within their functions in a responsible and ethical manner, with the objective of shaping the UNESCO Guidelines for the Use AI Systems in Courts and Tribunals.
- There have been positive steps through organizing such sessions to build trust of judicial officials in emerging technology such as AI and to be confident in the use of such technologies, where available, in their functions.
- Furthermore, with the increasing deployment of AI in judicial contexts in recent years, there is a growing need for capacity building of judicial officers to be aware of relevant use cases of AI in their work. In addition, it is essential for both individual and institutional capacity building initiatives to be carried out for such judicial officials to be aware of responsible and ethical use of AI tools, and of the benefits and risks to human rights presented by these systems.
- However, these capacity building initiatives are still limited in their reach with the trainings being capped to a select number of judicial officials. For instance, such initiatives have financial restraints where some countries may be able to organize national trainings on AI for judiciary, but this may not be the case where countries experience resource constraints.

Tangible outcomes (such as key achievements, announcements, launches, agreements, commitments, figures, and success stories)

In this session, UNESCO successfully launched the results of its Global Judges' Initiative Survey on the Use of AI Systems by Judicial Operators. The survey received responses from over 500 judicial operators from 96 countries concerning their use of generative AI, with a majority of the respondents indicating the need for guidelines for judges and their respective institutions on the use of AI within judicial contexts.

Actionable plan and key recommendations

The discussion was insightful with comments being received from the diverse panelists and stakeholders attending the session, which contributions are expected to assist in shaping the UNESCO Guidelines for the Use of AI Systems in Courts and Tribunals, currently under development.

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

The WSIS Forum 2025 may consider topics specific to the global collaboration on governance of AI, and specifically on regulatory requirements of LLMs and generative AI. Furthermore, we recommend that the judiciary should also be more involved in AI Governance.

Youth Engagement Around WSIS Action Lines (WSA)

Wednesday, 29 May 2024, 16:00-16:45
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/185

Key Issues discussed

- Youth Engagement in the agenda 2030 starts with equipping them with the education and skills to understand processes, find the right frameworks and networks to contribute to and provide them with understanding around policy making, digital governance and the work of international organizations
- Young People want to be heard and taken seriously, rather than being involved in "youth washing" events, where organizations are proud to involve young people in side events, but youth is not involved in those meetings were decisions are made.
- Young people are eager to participate and contribute to international events like the High-Level WSIS Forum, since they want to create their future, rather than hearing "you are the future". They are living in the present and are dedicated to contribute to change and concrete solutions for the agenda 2030.
- Young Digital Innovators and Entrepreneurs from all over the world come up with concrete solutions around WSIS action lines, providing citizen centered solutions around education, health, democratic participation, inclusion and are concretely contributing to the Tunis agenda and the achievement of the UN SDGs

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

- Not forgetting the focus on inclusive knowledge societies
- AI for social impact – more linkage between WSIS and AIforGood

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

WSA gala and recognition of global best practice solutions achieving the UN SDGs at the WSIS 2025.

WSA has been initiated in 2003 at the WSIS in Geneva as Austrian membership initiative. Since 2003, WSA reaches out to innovation ecosystems in 180+ countries and uses every year the mechanism of a global award scheme to recognize the best digital applications for WSIS action line C7. WSA focusses on the local impact, the appropriate use of technology, the value add for the target group and the content in local language.

At the WSIS HL Forum 2013 in Paris, WSA already contributed with a showcase and it would be a great contribution to the WSIS 2025 to showcase the work and achievements of digital innovators over the past 20+ years.

EW4 All Initiative, where cooperation is the key of success (World Broadcasting Union and Eurovisioni)

Wednesday, 29 May 2024, 17:00-17:45
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/343

Key Issues discussed

- EW4ALL initiative launched by UN in 2022 aims to provide all UN members countries of multi-hazards Early Warning systems by 2027. The implementation has been given to UNDRR, to WMO, to ITU and to IFRC.
- Data are the key to the success of any Early Warning policy.
  - Data about the exposure : where are located people and critical infrastructure
  - Data about vulnerability: poverty level, availability of electricity and of connectivity, degree of environmental risks (risk of landslide or of floods), etc.
  - These data have not only to be Big Data (at the regional, national level…) but also at the local level.
  - Today such kind of data needed for EWS are not always available or are not for free or are not standardized. This make the whole effort of EW4ALL complicate. (Fanny Langella, Head content and channels at UNDRR)
- Broadcasting unions started to focus on Early warning systems and on Disaster Risk reduction just after the Great Tsunami of 2004. They realized quite soon that the main problem was not only the timely and accurate availability of data for producing early warning. It is also needed to deliver timely ,reliable and usable alerts to the population that is going to be affected by an hazard (provoked by climate change or by other reason, it doesn't really matter). So coordination among the various actors and communication emerged quite soon as the real issue to be solved. (Ahmed Nadeem, ABU's Secretary General)
- Effective early warning services need to be co-designed with the communities and have feedback mechanisms to help ensure messages reach people through preferred and trusted communication channels, in actionable formats. The main channel to do so has been identified in mobile phones and cell broadcasting, because 4 people out of 5 in the world own today a mobile phone (Amélie Grangeat, Disaster Preparedness Specialist at ITU)
- The key point –once an alert is issued and bring to the attention of the concerned citizens- is to know exactly what has to be done and by who. All has to be set up in advance, solutions have to be identified beforehand and then the management of the crises will consist in adapting the available answers to the specific needs case by case. And this is the role of the Red Cross in the play. (Nathan Cooper, Manager of Global Disasters preparedness at IFRC)
- But there is another 20% of world population that cannot be reached by the mobile phones and that can be reached only through broadcasting (radio mainly). This is why it's important that also this traditionally neglected media like the radio will be fully included in the EW4ALL strategy, especially in Less developed countries. A just published study of EBU about "Radio in times of crisis", shows this evidence, based on a series of recent cases all across Europe, North Africa and Middle East. (Walid Sami, senior project manager at EBU)

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

The recognition of Disaster Risk Reduction and of Climate change impact as two areas crucial for the WSIS is an important achievement. But in order to make this really an achievement, DTT and efforts of mitigation and adaptation to Climate change, need to be promoted to a separate action line of the WSIS +20. The next 30 years will see an increase of the number and of the magnitude of disasters. That's why WSIS will have to recognize the reflection and cooperation on these topic as one of its priorities.

Tangible outcomes (such as key achievements, announcements, launches, agreements, commitments, figures, and success stories

- More about cell broadcasting technology and perspectives in this study: https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Emergency-Telecommunications/Pages/Publications/EW4All.aspx
- EW4ALL UN website: https://www.un.org/en/climatechange/early-warnings-for-all
- World premiere presentation of the study "Radio in times of crisis" published by the EBU, here available (the report is public, but you need first to register): https://www.ebu.ch/files/live/sites/ebu/files/Publications/MIS/login_only/market_insights/EBU-MIS-Radio_in_times_of_Crisis.pdf. The research present a series of case studies of disasters occurred in the last years in the Euro Mediterranean region.

Actionable plan and key recommendations

- IFRC: all concerned partners need to be patient: to establish a proper cooperation needs time
- ABU: work together within all concerned parties is the key, and broadcasting actors are ready to play their role
- ITU: knowledge sharing among all partners, at all level (global, regional, national and local) and across all boundaries (civil protection authorities, red cross, telecom operators, media, etc.)
- UNDRR: trust is the essential word. You need to provide trusted Early warnings. You need to provide it through reliable and trusted communication tools. You need to be trusted on the field in order to convince people to follow the instructions provided.

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

Structure a dedicate section on what technology could make for DRR and Climate change within the next WSIS would be not only a laudable thing, but also will represent a first concrete action following the resolutions that will be taken at the next Summit of the Future in New York.

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL AVAILABLE:

ITU PRESENTATION
IFRC PRESENTATION

Gender Equality and Inclusion in our Digital Future (World Association for Christian Communication & Global Alliance on Gender and Media)

Wednesday, 29 May 2024, 17:00-17:45

https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/301

Key Issues discussed

- Current version of the Global Digital Compact. Analysis from a feminist perspective:
  - What the GDC has done well: Eg, recognition of digital divides within countries.
  - What the GDC misses:
    - While the need to address the concentration of market power is noted, a gender analysis of markets is missing.
    - The imagination of public participation is missing. There needs to be a stronger articulation of the sovereignty of people – in line with feminist principles.
  - Recommendations to increase possibility of a GDC that a safe, equitable, and empowering for all.
- Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence (TFGBV)
  - is amplifying risks for women who want to be part of the digital space. That is, ALL women, not limited to those in the public eye. Gender biases and stereotypes are amplified.
  - Lack of algorithmic transparency. It's not clear if women genuinely hold the right to participate.
  - When women and girls are harassed online, the responsibility of defending themselves is entirely on their shoulders.
  - Platforms while not the main actors, are not interlocutors for everyone - only for the privileged. When issues arise in global majority nations, there's no recourse as the platforms in most cases are not domiciled in these countries.
- META Inc case.
  - Collaborates with civil society across the globe to provide guidance on its community guidelines and especially how they impact women and girls. META engages regularly with safety partners worldwide to inform the work and seek feedback.

Towards WSIS+20 and WSIS beyond 2025

Challenges

- Marginalisation of women's rights activists from digital governance spaces
- Solutions tend to be contextual at best while they should be systemic as well. For example, rather than address TFGBV against an individual, address the chilling effects.
- There seems to be no ability to act on digital injustices.
- There is as well no ability to scrutinize data agreements, particularly so in global majority nations that are recipients of what comes from the global north.
- Policy experiments happen without regard for national laws.
- There is lack of recognition of misogyny in all its forms and intensity.

Opportunities

There exists a wealth of feminist knowledge in civil society that can be harnessed to inject critical analyses and approaches to WSIS processes. It is important to encourage and welcome this input.

Tangible outcomes

- Advocacy for a New Gender Deal for WSIS+20. One that:
  - Calls on all relevant actors – the UN system, governments, media and digital communication companies, and civil society movements - to support the inclusion of a new gender deal in the digital ecosystem.
  - Interrogates existing norms and reinforces mechanisms to strengthen gender equality within the technology sector.
  - Implements actions designed to respond to urgent identified needs, such as:
    - ensuring universal and safe access of women and girls to the digital ecosystem;
    - promoting regulatory and co-regulatory mechanisms at national, regional and international levels;
    - implementing frameworks for algorithmic transparency, incorporating methods such as third-party audits;
    - promoting digital literacy programmes with a gender component;
    - encouraging efforts by women's organisations in using digital media and online spaces to amplify their stories;
    - ensuring safe conditions for women journalists and human rights defenders; and,
    - tackling online and offline gender-based harassment and violence against women and girls, gagging clauses and consequent immunity from the law.
  - Urges the international community to recognise the centrality of these issues in achieving gender equality in the 21st century.

Key recommendations

The Global Digital Compact should be revised as follows:

- It should include provisions that recognize and address misogyny
- It should include a standalone specific gender goal to prioritize women's and girls' rights to live free from violence and benefit equally from technology.
- It should provide for the establishment of a gender equality committee to integrate gender perspectives into digital policies, consisting of experts in gender, digital rights, cybersecurity, and representatives from women's organizations and survivors of digital violence
- It should require mandatory gender impact assessments for all digital policies and initiatives to anticipate and mitigate negative impacts on women and girls.
- It should require gender parity in decision-making bodies related to digital technologies to ensure diverse perspectives and equitable outcomes.
- It should require comprehensive online safety standards that prioritize the safety of women and girls, including robust mechanisms for reporting and swiftly removing harmful content in order to transform norms.
- It should require international collaboration and data sharing given that TFGBV transcends borders:
- It should require provision of safety services, psychological support and legal aid to TFGBV survivors.
- It should ensure investment in education and awareness campaigns that promote digital literacy, respectful online behavior, respect and consent.
- It should hold rights bearers accountable for violating human rights in ALL jurisdictions.

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

- Building an Information Society founded on feminist principles of equity, equality, inclusion, fairness and justice.
- Tackling online misogyny and tech-facilitated gender-based violence (TFGBV)
- Transforming gender norms in the online space to enable respect for women's digital rights, including the right to participate in all aspects of tech ecosystems

Leveraging Multistakeholder Action to Combat TFGBV through the Global Partnership (National Democratic Institute)

Wednesday, 29 May 2024, 17:00–17:45
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/237

Key Issues discussed

- More women in politics improves outcomes for all people. The examples are global and consistent. We know that the full participation of all people makes democracy better, but around the world, women are backing away from political participation, and the #1 reason they give is the attacks they face on social media. In the midst of elections, the increase of gendered disinformation is even more apparent. Online violence against women in politics is blinking red for democracy globally, and immediate steps must be taken to address it.
- Anti-rights state and non-state actors use digital technologies and platforms to target and exclude individual women and their groups strategically. They delegitimize community campaigns and when women and young girls see that happen, they keep quiet and shy away from participating for fear of harm or harm to their families.
- Generative AI more readily enables the large-scale and automated creation of falsified intimate images of the targeted women and uses AI-powered bots to amplify inauthentic messages. The attacks go beyond what can be charged in court with threats of physical violence (where laws exist). They focus on their gender roles and relations, as opposed to their policy and advocacy priorities.
- The panel hightlighted the Global Partnership meeting which provided a unique opportunity for stakeholders to come together to shift the conversation around TFGBV from admiring the problem to planning the solutions. These solutions were developed by women in the global south and represent priority issues for the 14 governments of the Global Partnership.
- Key partners for this conversation included National Democratic Institute who sponsored the event with the support of the UK government, with the United States and Kenya serving as copartners. UN Women, the Associate for Progressive Communications, and UNICEF also served as key partners for that gathering that informed the report presented.

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.

- When the WSIS action lines were developed, TFGBV (technology facilitated gender based violence) was not an issue clearly identified by member countries and stakeholders. The global growth of the challenge was specifically given voice in the context of the IGF, which sparked governments and civil society to work together to have the issue included in the 67th Committee on the Status of Women as a major concern. This exemplifies the power of the WSIS process to include new and critical issues that intersect with global priroities.
- WSIS must adapt its existing lines to acknowledge and address the rapid development of emerging technologies, including generative AI, the IoT, and other technologies that have spun up since WSIS was established in 2003, and most importantly its impact on people.

- Inclusion must be rooted in every action WSIS takes. Without the inclusion of women, persons with disabilities, ethnic and racial minorities, and the Global Majority, any internet governance plan will lack stability and majority buy-in.

Tangible outcomes (such as key achievements, announcements, launches, agreements, commitments, figures, and success stories

- Civil society has been at the lead of tracking, identifying, reporting, and combatting TFGBV, contributing more than 300 identifiable interventions to address these challenges ranging from legal frameworks to efforts to assist survivors.
- The Global Partnership meeting in Nairobi, Kenya in April 2024 provided a unique opportunity for stakeholders to come together to shift the conversation around TFGBV from admiring the problem to planning the solutions, the specific focus on women in elections and critical democratic moGENments clearly articulates the challenge to the promise of human rights law for the full participation of all people in the digital space.
- Advocacy efforts from civil society and governments should frame the problem of TFGBV appropriately and reinforce the fact that TFGBV is a democracy and national security issue.

Actionable plan and key recommendations

- TFGBV is a clear and present danger to democracy. Democracy actions that don't explicitly address the challenges that women face fail to capture the experiences of half the population. Gender and inclusion have long been a focus of democracy efforts, but the gap in aligning inclusive technology objectives to democracy and gender persists. Achieving freedom of expression for all depends on the ability to prevent threats online, and among human, civic and political rights issues, freedom of expression is at particular risk from gendered disinformation which both excludes diversity and drives malign action towards the targets.
- Governments and the technology industry must act together and civil society must demand accountability. Civil society actors have documented research globally, developed strategies, and banded together to support women in crisis moments, but it's far too big a task given the enormous imbalance in power between CSOs and governments, and between the majority of governments and the technology industry.
- Civil society, governments, and the technology industry must keep the focus on the individual survivors while they look at the systemic problem of TFGBV. Where legal frameworks don't exist, they must be put in place – and where they are in place, they must be socialized with judges and police forces. The responsibility should not be on a female politician to explain to law enforcement why a harmful meme against her children warrants their attention as a threat to the democratic process and a human rights abuse.
- Governments and the technology industry should react swiftly when harm is done, taking action to establish a safe environment for those attacked.

Suggestions for thematic aspects that might be included in the WSIS Forum 2025 (WSIS+20 Forum High-Level Event)

The global problem of TFGBV should be a key topic at the WSIS+20 Forum. Not only has this issue been clearly identified as a key topic by civil society in the context of the IGF, UNESCO and the CSW,

increasingly governments and technology companies have acknowledged the challenge. It is a tangible example of an intersectional issue between the WSIS Action Lines and the SDGs that is a priority for individuals, global majority driven, multi stakeholder driven and most importantly, solvable. To create a safer, more inclusive internet environment, half of the world's population must be included. Connectivity alone will not empower women to fully participate in the digital space, the frameworks and best practices around technologies are critical for the wellbeing of all people.

The future of Digital Public Infrastructure for environmental sustainability (UNEP)

Wednesday, 29 May 2024, 17:00-17:45
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/456

Key Issues discussed

- Relevance of DPI for Environmental Sustainability with a growing emphasis on data transparency, interoperability, and governance to support environmental decision-making.
- Promoting data-driven decision-making and policy formulation through effectively utilizing DPI for environmental monitoring, analysis, and reporting.
- Enhancing governance frameworks for DPI implementation, focusing on data privacy, security, and ethical considerations.
- Discussion on various technology innovations like open data discovery, privacy-enhancing data sharing, and transparent design as crucial for DPI implementation.
- Regulatory complexities surrounding DPI implementation, including data privacy concerns, standards harmonization, and cybersecurity risks.
- Importance of involving the private sector in DPI initiatives for addressing environmental challenges and fostering collaboration between governments and private entities.

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

- Digital Public Infrastructure has gained momentum since 2022 as an emerging area of interest to countries.
- ICTs are the backbone of Digital Public Infrastructure and this agenda will shape societies in fundamental ways. WSIS action line 1 will gain particular importance as countries and regions adopt digital transformation agendas with digital public infrastructure as an element.
- For Digital Public Infrastructure to be scaled up, information and communication needs to be widely available. The digital divide must be closed to achieve development and environmental goals in the next few years, following WIS action line 2.
- The adoption of the Global Environmental Data Strategy in 2025 will be a key contributor to WSIS action line 3 as it will have an impact on the accessibility of information and knowledge worldwide.
- The implementation of WSIS action line 6 is key for Digital Public Infrastructure as countries will need to transform and nurture enabling environments ideal for innovation.

Tangible outcomes (such as key achievements, announcements, launches, agreements, commitments, figures, and success stories)

- The United Nations Environment Programme announced the launched of the report 'Digital Public Infrastructure for Environmental Sustainability', accompanied by the leading institutions on DPI for the occasion.
- UNEP is in the process of developing a global environmental data strategy aimed at harmonizing environmental data standards and improving data governance, quality, and accessibility.
- There are concrete opportunities on Digital Public Infrastructure for Environmental Sustainability, such as aiming to go from design to prototype with the Golf Stack initiative as tangible platform for DPI implementation.

Actionable plan and key recommendations

- Commitments to enhancing policy frameworks and regulatory environments to support DPI implementation, including considerations for data privacy, security, and ethical use of technology in environmental governance.
- Collaboration between public and private sectors, academia, and international organizations for DPI initiatives, fostering inclusive decision-making and knowledge exchange.
- Establish a comprehensive framework for digital public infrastructure (DPI) for environmental sustainability, encompassing data governance, interoperability standards, and privacy protections.

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

Organize a session on the success stories of Digital Public Infrastructure for data exchange systems.

Towards a human-centric approach to connectivity that leaves no one behind (IFLA, UNESCO, IT for Change & GSMA)

Wednesday, 29 May 2024, 17:00-17:45

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/176

How can AI Help Protect Information Integrity (Latvian Mission to UN)

Thursday, 30 May 2024, 08:45-09:45
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/159

Key Issues discussed

- Importance of accessibility within the work of WSIS
- The synergies between the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and WSIS, telecommunication and information technologies and the digital space.
- The need for collaborative efforts for the development and implementation of technologies that benefit Persons with Disabilities.
- The benefits of Artificial Intelligence in the achievement and protection of the Human Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the improvement of their daily lives.
- The National efforts carried out towards the protection of the Human Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

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

ITU members expressed their interest in deepening into the subject of accessibility in further WSIS events.

Tangible outcomes (such as key achievements, announcements, launches, agreements, commitments, figures, and success stories

The audience showed a great interest in the panel discussion and inquired the efforts achieved by the panelists, diverse delegations expressed their will to engage in cooperation towards the implementation of similar technologies within their countries.

Actionable plan and key recommendations

- Ensure the ethical use of technologies that benefit Persons with Disabilities.
- Improve the coordination efforts between the Agencies that address issues of Persons with Disabilities.
- Improve the coordination between the public and private sector towards the implementation of technologies that benefit accessibility of Persons with Disabilities.

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

Address further the issues of accessibility of digital technologies for Persons with Disabilities.

From Local AI to Global AI: Lessons learned from the Global Assessment on Responsible AI in Cities (Operating Unit on Policy-Driven Electronic Governance)

Thursday, 30 May 2024, 09:00-09:45

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/143

Local first: A different way of localizing technologies on a grassroots level (WeRobotics)

Thursday, 30 May 2024, 09:00-09:45

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/340

Placing learners at the center: ensuring that the use of technology in education is properly defined, measures and governed (UNESCO and Global Education Monitoring Report)

Thursday, 30 May 2024, 09:00-09:45

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/353

Strengthening the Measurement of ICT for Sustainable Development: 20 Years of Progress and New Frontiers (Partnership on Measuring ICT for Development)

Thursday, 30 May 2024, 09:00-09:45

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/158

Foster AI accessibility for building inclusive knowledge Societies: a multi-stakeholder reflection on WSIS+20 review (IFAP)

Thursday, 30 May 2024, 10:00-10:45

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/201

Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) for global peace, prosperity, and security through the Internet of Things (IoT) (Internal Resources Division (IRD), Ministry of Finance, Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka, Bangladesh)

Thursday, 30 May 2024, 10:00-10:45
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/183

Moderator:

Engr. Md Selim Reza, System Analyst, Internal Resources Division, Ministry of Finance, Bangladesh

Panellists:

1. Ms. Cristina Bueti, Counsellor on Metaverse & Smart Cities, International Telecommunication Union (ITU), Geneva
2. Prof. Dr. Mostofa Kamal Nasir, Professor, Mawlana Bhashani Science and Technology University (MBSTU), Bangladesh
3. Engr. Selim Mahmud, Manager, BRAC Bank PLC, Bangladesh
4. Dr. Md M. Islam Bulbul, Program Manager, NNS at Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Bangladesh
5. Dr. Tohfa - E – Ayub, Assistant Professor, Ibrahim Medical College (University of Dhaka), Bangladesh

Topics:

5G, Technology, Artificial Intelligence, Big Data, Blockchain, Cloud Computing, Cultural Diversity, Cybersecurity, Digital Divide, Digital Economy, Digital Inclusion, Digital Transformation, Education, Environment, Ethics, Health, Human Rights, Infrastructure, Machine Learning, Media, Smart Cities

WSIS Action Lines:

C1. The role of governments and all stakeholders in the promotion of ICTs for development
C2. Information and communication infrastructure
C3. Access to information and knowledge
C4. Capacity building
C5. Building confidence and security in use of ICTs
C6. Enabling environment
C7. ICT applications: benefits in all aspects of life — E-government
C7. ICT applications: benefits in all aspects of life — E-business
C7. ICT applications: benefits in all aspects of life — E-learning
C7. ICT applications: benefits in all aspects of life — E-health
C7. ICT applications: benefits in all aspects of life — E-employment
C7. ICT applications: benefits in all aspects of life — E-environment
C7. ICT applications: benefits in all aspects of life — E-agriculture
C7. ICT applications: benefits in all aspects of life — E-science
C8. Cultural diversity and identity, linguistic diversity and local content

C9. Media
C10. Ethical dimensions of the Information Society
C11. International and regional cooperation

Sustainable Development Goals

Goal 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere
Goal 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture
Goal 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all
Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
Goal 6: Ensure access to water and sanitation for all
Goal 7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all
Goal 8: Promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all
Goal 9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote sustainable industrialization and foster innovation
Goal 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries
Goal 11: Make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable
Goal 12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns
Goal 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts
Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources
Goal 15: Sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation, halt biodiversity loss
Goal 16: Promote just, peaceful and inclusive societies
Goal 17: Revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development

Key Issues discussed:

- This session focused on the positive contributions that Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) and the Internet of Things (IoT) can make towards a more peaceful, prosperous, and secure world.
- Harnessing the Power of ICT and IoT. Cyber security is an essential investment.
- **Smart Cities:** Leveraging IoT networks to optimize traffic flow, manage energy consumption, and improve public safety.
- **Global Health Management:** Utilizing ICT for disease surveillance and healthcare delivery in remote areas.
- **Environmental Monitoring:** Employing IoT sensor networks to monitor environmental threats like deforestation and pollution.
- Sustainable Development and Global Collaboration and Standards
- Data Privacy, Security and Cybersecurity Threats

Towards WSIS+20 and WSIS beyond 2025, our views on the emerging trends, challenges, achievements, and opportunities in the implementation of the WSIS Action Lines to date:

- **Bridging the Digital Divide:** Unequal access to ICT remains a major hurdle. While infrastructure expansion is crucial, fostering digital literacy programs is equally important to ensure people can actively participate in the digital world.

- **Prioritizing Cybersecurity:** The ever-growing interconnectedness of devices necessitates robust cybersecurity measures. International collaboration is vital to develop and implement best practices for securing IoT networks and safeguarding sensitive data.
- **Promoting Responsible Innovation:** As AI and IoT continue to evolve, ethical considerations must be at the forefront. Also need to ensure these technologies are developed and deployed responsibly, addressing issues like algorithmic bias, privacy concerns, and environmental sustainability.
- **Smart City Deployments:** Cities worldwide are leveraging IoT networks to optimize traffic flow, manage energy consumption, and enhance public safety. These deployments demonstrate the potential of ICTs for improving urban life.
- **Global Health Initiatives:** Projects like the INDEPTH network exemplify the power of ICT for strengthening disease surveillance and healthcare delivery in remote areas. Such initiatives highlight the positive impact of ICTs on global health outcomes.
- **The Road Ahead:** By addressing the ongoing challenges and seizing the opportunities presented by emerging trends, that can create a future aligned with the WSIS vision.
- **Technology as an empowering force:** ICTs should foster collaboration, enable participation, and unlock new possibilities for individuals and communities.
- **ICTs for a more peaceful and prosperous world:** ICTs can contribute to sustainable development, bridge divides, and promote peace and security for all.
- Through continued collaboration and innovation, that can leverage the power of ICTs to build a better world for everyone.

Tangible outcomes along with key achievements, announcements, launches, agreements, commitments, figures, and success stories:

- **Increased International Collaboration on Cybersecurity:** Establishment of a permanent international cyber forum or working group dedicated to sharing best practices for securing IoT networks, fostering joint vulnerability research, and coordinating responses to major cyberattacks.
- **Digital Literacy Initiatives Reach Millions:** Launch of a global digital literacy program, reaching millions of individuals in underserved regions with basic computer skills training, online safety education, and responsible technology use practices.
- **Smart City Deployments Showcase Efficiency and Sustainability:** City successfully implements an IoT-powered traffic management system, resulting in reduction in traffic congestion and decrease in carbon emissions.
- **Global Health Network Expands Reach:** The INDEPTH network expands its reach to additional countries, leveraging IoT for disease surveillance and improving healthcare delivery in remote areas.
- **Development of Ethical Frameworks for AI and IoT:** A leading international organization releases a comprehensive set of ethical guidelines for the development and deployment of AI and IoT solutions, focusing on responsible data collection, algorithmic fairness, and user privacy.

Actionable plan and key recommendations:

- **Prioritize Global Cybersecurity:**
    - Foster international collaboration to develop and implement best practices for securing IoT networks and protecting data. This includes sharing information on cyber threats and vulnerabilities, and coordinating defensive measures.

- o   Promote public awareness of cyber security threats and best practices for staying safe online. Also achieved through educational campaigns and public outreach programs.
- **Bridge the Digital Divide for Inclusive Development:**
  - o   Invest in expanding internet infrastructure, particularly in underserved regions.
  - o   Develop and implement digital literacy programs to ensure everyone can participate in the digital world. This includes training on basic computer skills, online safety, and responsible use of technology.
- **Promote Responsible Innovation in ICT and IoT:**
  - o   Develop ethical frameworks for the responsible development and deployment of ICT and IoT solutions. These frameworks should address issues like algorithmic bias, privacy concerns, and environmental sustainability.

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

The WSIS Forum 2025 could delve deeper into the transformative potential of ICT and IoT. A key theme could be the responsible integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) with IoT. This session could explore how this convergence can address global challenges like climate change and healthcare disparities. In today's digital economic era, cyber security has become a vital and non-negotiable element for running an organization. Discussions on mitigating potential risks, such as algorithmic bias and privacy concerns, would be crucial to ensure these technologies serve humanity's greater good. Sustainable development is promoted through environmental monitoring, resource management, and global collaboration on IoT standards. Finally, addressing data privacy, security, and cybersecurity threats is essential to protect IoT environments and build trust. Together, these aspects illustrate how IoT can drive global peace and prosperity by creating more resilient, equitable, and efficient systems.

Navigating the Double-Edged Sword: ICT's and AI's Impact on Climate Change and Environmental Sustainability (ITU)

Thursday, 30 May 2024, 10:00-10:45

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/368

Towards inclusive digital innovation ecosystems – do's and dont's and what next? (IT for Change)

Thursday, 30 May 2024, 10:00-10:45
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/177

Key Issues discussed

- International trade and IP regimes have been used to narrow down domestic policy space for countries and restrict and prohibit transparency and accountability measures like disclosure of source code
- User centric design, even at government level for cross-ministerial collaboration, is important, and measures like interoperability enable this to happen
- Data inequity is a reality and can only be resolved through a global data governance framework.
- Even as discussions around global frameworks are discussed, involvement of all peoples – especially indigenous peoples – in a way that considers their voice and needs is important.
- There is a need to ensure access as well as accessibility of digital technologies for all, in a way that benefits them and not just profit making companies.

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

- Connectivity that is fast and reliable, especially for people living in remote areas, is important. This imagines scope for local innovation to ensure the people can participate in a way they want
- The development of international coherent standards for provision of state services through GovStack can enable countries to be more self-reliant and improve government processes.
- The lack of data sharing principles on global issues like climate change or pandemics poses a considerable challenge particularly for Global South countries who have larger marginal and vulnerable populations.
- The dominant narrative on the idea of innovation is market-oriented and fails to consider the needs of the people
- The dialogue on WSIS must enable bringing the information to indigenous peoples and bring their voice to decision making spaces, and learn from the original WSIS

Tangible outcomes (such as key achievements, announcements, launches, agreements, commitments, figures, and success stories)

- The CSTD's multistakeholder dialogue on issues of governance of data for development, based on outcomes from its working group, is significant and will be tracked.
- WSIS+20 must be multistakeholder in the real sense and involve voices from the margins to ensure it encapsulates the vision for an information society that is just and equitable.
- The recognition of digital industrialisation in the WTO Work Programme is important to continue to regulate the digital economy in a way that serves the people

Actionable plan and key recommendations

- There must be enhanced international cooperation and interagency collaboration for a holistic view of development
- There must be disclosure of data at a multilateral level, of transactions and electronic transmission, to enable countries to benefit from

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

There needs to be a holistic discussion on development, which focuses on competitive growth and is non-mercantilist. The WSIS Forum in 2025 must look at public value for societies, with frameworks for disclosures around algorithms and source codes which can be implemented globally. This includes standards, and other technical information. Additionally, questions around open source and public AI models should be considered that can support governments to build their own systems.

Twenty Years After the Tsunami 2004: How Knowledge Transfer Could Improve Safety in Countries at Risk (World Broadcasting Union)

Thursday, 30 May 2024, 10:00-10:45
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/207

Key Issues discussed

Main lesson learned 20 years after the Big Tsunami:

- Providing accurate and timely information is primordial, but the key to success is the cooperation among all the actors that could share and spread this information, reach all the population and coordinate the action of the various actors on the field (Ms Gill-CBU)
- Adapt the early warning system to the various situations (geographic as well related to the nature of the hazard) in order to cover the whole range of possible channels of communication not only the traditional ones. Disasters tend to repeat, but very often in a different way from the previous one. The Indian Ocean tsunami of 2004 was provoked by earthquake. The following one affecting Palu was provoked by a mega-landslide. And the one in 2018 was provoked by a volcanic eruption. The sensors needed to detect these hazards are different… (Ms. Karnawati, head of BMKG Indonesia)
- Early Warning for All is a fundamental human right, because nowadays is absolutely essential to preserve the most important valuable thing that each human has: their life. A goal that the acceleration of the number and magnitude of hazards due to climate change, makes it more and more difficult to guarantee this fundamental human right (Ms. Ilieva – ABU/MSL project)
- Communication is absolutely essential but is probably the weakest link in the Early Warnings process. Providing life – saving information to each and everyone, even in the most remote and isolated areas is crucial. (Ms. Rana, media expert)
- Timing is a crucial factor. The Indonesian Early Warning for tsunami –when the first systems were introduced after 2004 disaster - could alert people 5 minutes before the impact of the waves. The current alert systems can alert populations 30 minutes before the impact. We need to make a good use of this larger margin, to communicate to everybody in an effective way and to have plans in place to organize the evacuation from all the areas where the impact is expected within these 25 minutes….(Mr. Jati, in charge of NDMA, Indonesia)

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

The recognition of Disaster Risk Reduction and of Climate change impact as two areas crucial for the WSIS is an important achievement. But in order to make this really an achievement, DTT and efforts of mitigation and adaptation to Climate change, need to be promoted to a separate action line of the WSIS +20. The next 30 years will see an increase of the number and of the magnitude of disasters that WSIS will have to recognize as a priority.

Tangible outcomes (such as key achievements, announcements, launches, agreements, commitments, figures, and success stories

- The fact that 20 years after the Great Tsunami all the countries that were affected that time are now covered by an Early Warning system is already an important achievement. But this is not sufficient. As discussed during the workshop, the hazards could have different natures, evolution and form of impacts. So, technology needs to take in consideration all possible variations and the use of A.I. could be beneficiary in this sense.
- NDMA Indonesia has created a platform called INArisk where all the alerts and risks for the region could be seen and monitored in real time: https://inarisk.bnpb.go.id/ . A version of this app exists also for mobile phones and portable devices (inaRISK Personal)
- Plan International Indonesia has produced and released an app for early warning about floods in the Jakarta region (see the link: https://safesteps.com/d-tech/2021.php#non-profit-category) and now waits for its extension at the whole national level .
- ABU and CBU members in their respective regions (Asia - Pacific for ABU and Caribbean for CBU), have trained thousands of media professionals in the last 20 years about Tsunami alerts and also about all kinds of other alerts. Thanks to these efforts many media outlets are able to instruct population on what to do in case of imminent disaster and have established close links with the NDMAuthorities and Met Services in many countries.

Actionable plan and key recommendations

- Use the occasion of the EW4ALL initiative to complete the engagement of the countries that don't have yet Early Warning systems, starting from those most in need.
- Reinforce the infrastructure of all communication networks (not only the telecoms ones, but also broadcasters' ones), making them more resilient to all kind of hazards.

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

Structure a dedicated section on what technology could do for DRR and Climate change within the next WSIS would be not only a laudable thing, but also will represent a first concrete action following the resolutions that will be taken at the next Summit of the Future in New York.

Cibervoluntarios Network: Civic Technology to Change the World (Fundación Cibervoluntarios)

Thursday, 30 May 2024, 11:00-11:45

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/203

Empowering Tomorrow: Digital Inclusion Strategies for Sustainable Development (Shanghai Green Light-Year)

Thursday, 30 May 2024, 11:00-11:45
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/181

Key Issues discussed

- Directions for Chinese most influencial ICT companies to improve their digital inclusion performance and digital social impact: Access, Skill, Use, Innovation, and Core Social Indicators.
- Can ICT accelereate ESD work within globe?: In the process of promoting Education for Sustainable Development, what are roles of ICT productions? Toolists? Teaching materials? OR A plateform of showcases?
- Ageing in a digital world – from vulnerable to valuable: the approaches for Top 500 companies to use ICT productions empower the elder group and reduce the digital divide and enhace companies' digital inclusion performance.

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

- Emerging - Review and promotion of WSIS Action Line: digital management system makes all actions under WSIS Action Line be calculated and analyzed effectively. And providing the fit suggestions for alll actors and ITU.
- Challenge - Misuse AI caused by digital divide: Digial divide still make public has different capacity to access and use internet. It is difficult to ensure ethical and responsible use of emerging technologies to prevent misuse and safeguard privacy and human rights.

Tangible outcomes (such as key achievements, announcements, launches, agreements, commitments, figures, and success stories)

- **Key Findings:** Youth Research Report on 35 most influential Chinese ICT Companies' Digital Inclusion Performance 2023 -- Based on World Benchmarking Alliance's Digital Inclusion Benchmark Methodology 2021
- **Success Story - FutureCare Project:** Project FutureCare stimulates our aging loved ones' cognitive health, fosters joy, and enhances social connections, all while preventing dementia. With our MVP phase showing promising results, it's inspiring to see seniors embrace AI technology with enthusiasm and actively engaging their brains. Witnessing their smiles fills me with a sense of fulfillment. I aspire to continue leveraging AI to benefit more senior beneficiaries for proactive brain health and active aging.

Actionable plan and key recommendations

- Review WSIS Action Lines
- Enhance the collabration between IGO and local NGOs to expand the actions on digital inclusion.

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

First, there should be an emphasis on enhancing the professionalism and training of the organizational team to ensure that staff demonstrate positive attitudes and provide high-quality services to all attendees. It's crucial to allocate time for collaborative testing with venue partners to prevent technical issues that could disrupt in-person speeches by high-level officials and hinder online audience access. Additionally, the official reports of daily activities should be promptly updated to expand the influence of WSIS. Lastly, there should be a clear emphasis on the importance of WSIS events for ICT and digital SDGs work. These thematic aspects would contribute to the overall success and impact of the WSIS Forum 2025.

Ensuring Diversity in AI and Exploring Limitless Possibilities as a Conceptual Technologist (Parallax Futures)

Thursday, 30 May 2024, 11:00-11:45

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/221

From Tech Barriers to Digital Bridges: How can Technology advance Spatial Justice? (Université de Genève & World Smart Cities Organization)

Thursday, 30 May 2024, 11:00-11:45

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/210

Scaling Multistakeholder Partnerships: Connectivity and Education (Giga (ITU,UNICEF) & DTC (UNESCO))

Thursday, 30 May 2024, 11:00-11:45

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/205

Digital Policy Perspectives (ITU/UNESCO Broadband Commission for Sustainable Development)

Thursday, 30 May 2024, 14:00-14:45

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/255

How can Artificial Intelligence (AI) improve digital accessibility for persons with disabilities? (Mexico, Indonesia, Republic of Korea, Türkiye and Australia)

Thursday, 30 May 2024, 14:00-14:45
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/381

Key Issues discussed

- Importance of accessibility within the work of WSIS
- The synergies between the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and WSIS, telecommunication and information technologies and the digital space.
- The need for collaborative efforts for the development and implementation of technologies that benefit Persons with Disabilities.
- The benefits of Artificial Intelligence in the achievement and protection of the Human Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the improvement of their daily lives.
- The National efforts carried out towards the protection of the Human Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

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

ITU members expressed their interest in deepening into the subject of accessibility in further WSIS events.

Tangible outcomes (such as key achievements, announcements, launches, agreements, commitments, figures, and success stories)

The audience showed a great interest in the panel discussion and inquired the efforts achieved by the panelists, diverse delegations expressed their will to engage in cooperation towards the implementation of similar technologies within their countries.

Actionable plan and key recommendations

- Ensure the ethical use of technologies that benefit Persons with Disabilities.
- Improve the coordination efforts between the Agencies that address issues of Persons with Disabilities.
- Improve the coordination between the public and private sector towards the implementation of technologies that benefit accessibility of Persons with Disabilities.

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

Address further the issues of accessibility of digital technologies for Persons with Disabilities.

Intellectual Property and eSport for Development (WIPO)

Thursday, 30 May 2024, 14:00-14:45
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/242

Key Issues discussed

- The central role that intellectual property plays in making it possible for a video game industry to continuously grow in the past years as one of the most important industries in the entertainment sector.
- The importance of the phenomenon of e-sports beyond the video games industry and how intellectual property connects the different stakeholders in the e-sports environment, in particular, in contractual relationships.
- How alternative dispute resolution is becoming the de-facto alternative in the numerous contracts entered into as part of e-sports activities and how WIPO provides efficient solutions for the different stakeholders to solve their disputes.
- The recent 2024 World Intellectual Property Report (WIPR) showcased the video games innovative hubs and the various factors that lead certain locations being established as a hub. Similarly, there are a growing number of territories being established as e-sports hubs for various reasons.

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

- The growth of e-sports as an activity and economic sector with countries willing to develop capabilities to foster the video game industry and also e-sports activity.
- The growing use of intellectual property beyond video games, for example, in merchandising, audiovisual content, etc.
- The increased use of alternative dispute resolution as the most efficient way to solve disputes and, in particular, those related to intellectual property, for which WIPO has a longstanding expertise in providing alternative dispute resolution services.

Tangible outcomes (such as key achievements, announcements, launches, agreements, commitments, figures, and success stories)

- WIPO publication in 2024, of guidelines for competition organizers, e-sports professional players and teams.
- Analysis of e-sports from an economic perspective in the 2026 WIPO IP Report.

Actionable plan and key recommendations
- Diffusion of knowledge about alternative dispute resolution in e-sports competitions and between stakeholders.
- Policymakers aiming to bolster the growth and sustainability of video game hubs, to consider key actions outlined in the WIPR.

Synergy Human-AIM for complex problem solving (IFIP and University of Reims)

Thursday, 30 May 2024, 14:00-14:45 PM
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/231

Key Issues discussed

- Why synergy Human-AI is important (from general perspective and those of panelists)?
  - In energy production, industry 5.0, medicine..
- How this synergy was/can be implemented in the respective fields of panelists in the era of DL/Gen AI?
- Environmental, cognitive and societal impacts of genAI compared to synergy H-AI
- Thoughts from wrap-up to add
- AI applications should empower humans without declining their cognitive capacity.
- AI hardware and software should be "smart and green" by combining the natural and artificial intelligences, knowledge-based AI and GenAI in neuro-symbolic approach

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

- The suited assessment for measuring the effects of the actions is to consider
- All actions should be considered with global, holistic and system perspectives (interactions)
- Toward a wisening in AI research, tools and applications

Tangible outcomes (such as key achievements, announcements, launches, agreements, commitments, figures, and success stories)

- Smarter and greener hardware, software and AI
- Triple transformation (digital, green and smart
- More bio-inspired technology

Actionable plan and key recommendations

More "brain-oriented" then money oriented event

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

"Big picture" of climate change in aim understanding the multiple causes and set curative and preventive actions (update 17 goals)

WSIS Action Line C2: Challenges and solutions for broadband infrastructure deployment in developing countries, rural and remote areas (ITU-D FNS & ITU-T SG15)

Thursday, 30 May 2024, 14:00-14:45 PM
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/156

Key Issues discussed

- 1/3 of the world's population is still offline.
- Digital divide between high-income and low-income countries as well as between urban and rural areas.
- ITU Strategic Plan 2024-2027 - Goal: Universal Connectivity by 2030: Connecting the unconnected 2.6 billion people still living without the Internet is a truly challenging task.
- Challenges to deploy broadband connectivity in developing countries, rural and remote areas: Lack of infrastructure, Lack of skilled labour force, Technological and economic considerations (costs of deployment and return of investment), Affordability.

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

- Affordability of rural broadband infrastructure: There has been tremendous progress in the development of information and communication technologies over the past two decades, especially to facilitate, accelerate and reduce costs of deployment of fixed and mobile broadband networks infrastructures, including those to deliver internet connections to populations in developing countries, rural and remote areas.
- Wireless access technologies such as FWA and satellite access are often more cost-effective and enable faster deployment of broadband infrastructure in rural and remote communities.
- Fibre access technologies are regarded as superior broadband solutions to connect homes, business premises and mobile cell sites; however, setup costs for planning, optical cable installation and the longer deployment time often makes FTTx less affordable, especially in remote areas with no existing infrastructure.
- Emerging trend: Both technologies are complementary and are often deployed in a hybrid access infrastructure.

Tangible outcomes (such as key achievements, announcements, launches, agreements, commitments, figures, and success stories

- ITU-D FNS offers a range of products & services tools such as assessment studies, publications, workshops, guidelines, training and best practices on telecommunication/ICT infrastructure including wireless and fixed broadband, connecting rural and remote areas, conformance and interoperability, spectrum management, the effective and efficient management and proper use of telecommunications resources to assist ITU Member States and ITU-D Sector Members and Associates in maximizing the use of new technologies of their ITC infrastructure.

- ITU-T SG15 develops a broad range of international standards for broadband fibre access technologies including active equipment such as the PON and PtP systems, topologies for optical access networks, passive infrastructure components such as optical fibre and cables, WDM/splitters, closures, etc., as well as a range of innovative solutions to reduce time and cost of deployment, meet the challenges of the lack of skilled labour force and limited space across all infrastructure.
- Consideration of alternatives business models such as sharing costs to build and/or to operate the network were presented such as passive infrastructure sharing, active sharing and open access networks.

Actionable plan and key recommendations

Raise awareness of the products & services tools offered by ITU-D FNS to assist the wireless and fixed broadband deployment in developing countries, rural and remote areas, as well as of the international standards developed by ITU-T SG15 for optical access networks and innovative solutions to reduce time and cost of deployment.

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

There is no way to connect the unconnected without reliable network infrastructure: "Broadband Connectivity" should be considered as an essential topic in WSIS Forum agenda.

GovStack Digital Leaders Forum (ITU, Germany and Estonia)

Thursday, 30 May 2024, 15:00-15:45

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/516

Implementing Adaptative Governance and Sustainability to Boost Gender Equality at the Nexus of Technology and Innovation in Research and Development (WOMENVAI)

Thursday, 30 May 2024, 15:00-15:45 PM
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/253

Key Issues discussed

The key challenges to boost gender equality in Science and Technology include :

- Structural barriers: persistent gender gaps and inequalities due to structural barriers within the research and innovation sector require specific actions to overcome[1]
- Underrepresentation: women and girls are significantly underrepresented in STEM including AI which impacts the diversity of thought in innovation and research[2]

Addressing these challenges is crucial for creating inclusive environments that harness all talents and perspectives, thereby enhancing the quality and impact of technological advancements and innovations. As such, there is a need for better integration of the gender dimension into research and innovation content to improve the quality and societal relevance of the outcomes. We discussed solutions:

1. Gender and AI legislation: Ensuring that AI technologies are designed and used in ways that promote gender equality and do not perpetuate existing gender stereotypes or discrimination. And encouraging transparency and accountability in AI systems to monitor and mitigate gender-based disparities;
2. Having gender equality, technology and innovation being at the center: integrating gender equality considerations into technological advancements and innovation strategies.
3. Having new paradigm approached that are more flexible: Fostering a culture of continuous learning and improvement to ensure policies and practices remain relevant and effective in promoting gender equality.

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

- Emerging Trends: the digital landscape is increasingly characterized by convergence, requiring collaborative approaches between regulators, government authorities, industry, and stakeholders and yet the gender balance is not yet done from our perspective;
- The AI and Machine Learning (ML) are driving the development of new digital learning and collaboration solutions, enhancing the outreach and impact of capacity-building programs: these are growing fast without considering the Gender equality needed at all phases (legal, technical development, human resource education, stakeholders' involvement, etc.)
- Although there have been key milestones in internet governance, sector reform, and the progression of e-government, with open data emerging as a tool for transparency, yet there is an opportunity to utilize ICTs and new technologies to build an inclusive and effective path for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda.

Tangible outcomes (such as key achievements, announcements, launches, agreements, commitments, figures, and success stories)

All of the above propose tangible outcomes at different levels (from field action to highlevel governance:

- The IA toolkit "Génération IA" by EPF School of Engineers, led by the association that aims to make AI accessible to all by organizing roundtables, conferences, and creating tools to educate the public particularly the younger generation;[3]
- The WOMENVAI Digital Academy offers action-based workshops and training sessions aimed at capacity building in entrepreneurship for women entrepreneurs and small enterprises led by women, with a focus on gender equality and empowerment aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals;[4]
- The KIDsVAI initiative offers interactive workshops for school children, particularly girls, to deconstruct gender stereotypes and spark interest in technical professions, showcasing that these fields are open to all genders [5]
- The WOMENVAI Statement made at the occasion of the UN WOMEN CSW68 [6]

Actionable plan and key recommendations

- Advocacy and awareness: promote the removal of gender bias and stereotypes in STEM education and careers to foster an inclusive digital economy
- Capacity Building: deploy initiatives for women and girls in STEM, providing training and mentorship programs to enhance their skills and knowledge in STEM disciplines
- Legal frameworks designed in a way that have these issue incorporated in them make sure that these are known and implemented.

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

Preparing the Pact of the Future through ICTs is pivotal for a sustainable future and a more effective WSIS. Central to this is the integration of green ICT and sustainable practices within the information sector to diminish its environmental impact and foster ecological harmony. Importantly, ICTs are instrumental in combating climate change, offering enhanced monitoring and data analysis for informed action. Crucially, these efforts must prioritize gender equality by actively involving and empowering young women alongside their male counterparts. Their inclusion is vital, as it ensures diverse perspectives in developing innovative solutions and propels the crucial sustainability endeavours of the WSIS process.

The Academic Roundtable: Strengthening Collaboration with Academia on Emerging Trends (ITU)

Thursday, 30 May 2024, 15:00-16:00

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/530

The GDC and the WSIS+20 Processes: What's in it for Africa
(Kenya Permanent Mission to the UN in Geneva)

Thursday, 30 May 2024, 15:00-15:45

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/333

The Role of ICTs in Addressing the Challenges of Anti Microbial Resistance (AMR) (The Global Coalition on Aging)

Thursday, 30 May 2024, 15:00-15:45 PM
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/266

Key Issues discussed

- Anti-Microbial Resistance (AMR) is a mega-trend level issue which threatens global health systems with 10 million death a year by 2050 and as a result economic development and growth in LMICs and OECD countries.
- Greater attention must be given to Anti-Microbial resistance from the public, governments and the information and technology communities to further drive prevention, appropriate usage, sustainable development of antibiotics and new therapies.
- Appropriate use of antibiotics will help to address the AMR Crisis and as such, National Action Plans are being developed to achieve those goals. • Alongside biomedical innovation – new and sustainable pipeline of antibiotics – there must also be innovations in diagnostics for assessment of bacterial infections in people.
- Countries around the world face this problem, both in domestic and health settings and data management is needed to address the challenges and realize progress,
- The World Health Organization is deeply involved in this challenge and has developed innovative ways to address data gaps, including through new clinical surveillance plans.
- There is a large and critical role for technology and data, including AI, in the development and enabling of new therapies.
- New Policy reforms must be at the national levels (National Action Plans) and can be profoundly supported at the Global level (UNGA Special High-Level Meeting on AMR in September) in order to elevate policy maker's attention to AMR with the urgency and seriousness that it warrants.

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.

- Technology will continue to push development of better health through science, communications, and information.
- Technology must be directed to maintaining sustainable solutions for the challenges of AMR.

Tangible outcomes (such as key achievements, announcements, launches, agreements, commitments, figures, and success stories)

I.   The reports shared from Economist Impact and the AMR Industry Alliance as well as the work at the World Health Assembly and the upcoming UNGA High-Level meeting in September provide the framework for enhanced global attention to this global crisis.

II. There was an agreement that all would be done to continue the multi-sectoral cooperation and commitment to broadening awareness among health and technology ministers on a global basis.

Actionable plan and key recommendations

- Create a dedicated page on GCOA's website (www.globalcoalitiononaging.com) for the panel, including a summary of the discussion and the video itself (it will also live on the WSIS site). We will communicate this to the GCOA network via email blast and social media and the WSIS network, noting this is the first time AMR has been on the WSIS agenda.

- Share the panel recording with our robust media contact list to highlight the AMR crisis through the lens of aging and how technology can have an impact.

- Capture short clips from the recording to use on social media in the lead-up to the High-level Meeting on AMR in September, continuing to connect the conversation with our partners at WSIS and ITU.

- Share key findings from the panel, partnering with WSIS/ITU, to Ministries of Technology and their counterparts in the Ministries of Health and Finance.

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

Information and Communication Technology can and must play an important role in addressing the 21st century AMR global health crisis, enabling interoperable systems, supporting surveillance, and encouraging developments in diagnostics as well as biomedical innovative advances themselves—new antibiotics and a sustainable ongoing development pipeline. The crisis needs to engage Health, Finance, and IT Ministers together in driving solutions, who together, should bring it to the top of government agendas. ICT data gathering and surveillance are essential for developing the treatments that will provide the right medicines, dosed correctly to the right people. Finally, Governments need to support the sustainable development of new antibiotics therapies or risk a world without antibiotics that will set back the 20th century longevity gains themselves and threaten the ability in our 21st century to achieve healthy longevity.

Traceability of e-waste and the use of digital product passports for ICT goods (ITU, Secretariat of the Basel Convention, One Planet Network)

Thursday, 30 May 2024, 15:00-15:45

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/267

AR, VR and the Metaverse. An opportunity for enhancing eHealth Technologies (IGF Dynamic Coalition on Data Driven Health Technologies (DC-DDHT)

Thursday, 30 May 2024, 16:00-16:45
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/285

Key issues discussed:

1. There is an incredible and tremendous opportunity to leverage this technology for the healthcare industry and other industrial applications. It is no longer just for recreational use.
2. The internet is not a requirement for the use of these technologies, they can be used stand alone. Hence, it can be used in remote locations and integrated into telecommunications networks, with a phased in approach. It would require 5G.
3. These technologies fully immerse the user into a scenario and activate multiple human senses. There can be health side effects with overuse.
4. The use of these technologies can provide standardized, quality, repeatable training for healthcare staff. Student anxiety could be reduced and the most effective use of hands on training, may be achieved. Simulations increase the knowledge base of students. The use of the technology can reduce training costs and speed up training, which may also be conducted in remote locations, making education more accessible to all.
5. Public education, alternative medicines education, and education for patients at home, and for caregivers, can also be provided through these AR, VR Mixed Reality educational products. Some education is already in existence.
6. The privacy issues for these technologies must be discussed further. It uses real, cloned, twinned and AI developed data input values, to create a spectrum of real and artificial out-come and retained values
7. Technologies developed for other industries, e.g. the textile industry and electronic games industry, can be repurposed for use by the healthcare sector, reducing development costs and opening up to multistakeholder investment opportunities.
8. Africa has a young population that can be trained in and for the development of these technologies. Other countries that are textile producers should train their staff with IT skills to use these technologies.
9. The technology can be used innovatively to remediate for waste and e-waste issues, so as to assist with the management of impacts to global climate change and hazards management.
10. Healthcare workers can benefit with customized protective clothing and foot ware. Other industrial workers at risk, can also benefit with these design initiatives. This will also assist with development of medical robots.
11. Prosthetics and other customized medical supports for patients can be developed with these technologies, as well as assist with remote surgery, heath care discovery, modeling and simulations for preventative care.

Tangible Outcomes

Tremendous opportunity for training healthcare staff and for all industries for skills development. Health care training can be standardized, developed centrally at lower overall cost, to be made readily available. Perhaps the use of these technologies will reduce anxiety for students, with the opportunity to repeat training exercises and increase practice, leading to an enhanced skill and knowledge. This technology will not replace real practice, but will bring a better prepared student to the real practices,

enhancing the overall quality of the training and providing the opportunity to train more students faster and at a lower cost. This is a great opportunity for Public Private Partnerships investment between government and the healthcare industry.

Customization is a key feature of these technologies, that can be used with success across industries for many innovative applications.

Action Plan

Encourage ongoing and enhanced, global multi-stakeholder discussions regarding this technology space, including conversations on opportunities, risks, unseen issues and complexities, social benefits, economic benefits, remediation for climate change issues, values, norms, weaknesses etc.

A differentiation must be made between this fully immersive technology and general AI and mainstream robotics.

Records management vis a vis patient health care records, will have an additional level of complexity imposed upon it, by these technologies, and hence a full, analysis of each situation is required to limit risks, for instance to privacy. The development of an ITU guidance and issues paper document for this space would be beneficial for developers and users. Continued development of ISO and other standards and best practices recommended.

Themes for WSIS 2025

1. Should privacy best practices and legislation for AR, VR, Metaverse, and Mixed reality spaces be developed new, or should existing practices be enhanced ?
2. Should a special focus be developed for the Ethics governing this space ?
3. What public education should be rolled out for users and who should provide it?
4. Collaboration for multi-stakeholder / Public Private Partnerships for investing in this space, understanding, that the internet is not a pre-requisite for these technologies.
5. How can emerging technologies support waste and e-waste management, and the climate?

Charting the Course: Discussing the Impact and Future of the Internet Governance Forum (DNS Research Federation)

Thursday, 30 May 2024, 16:00-16:45

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/288

Connecting ICT, Digitalization and Industry 4.0 Technologies to accelerate economic growth and industrialization in developing countries (Digital Transformation Alliance (DTA) and United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO))

Thursday, 30 May 2024, 16:00-16:45

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/298

Embracing Multigenerational Digital Collaboration: Shaping the Future of Work (The Centre for Socio-Eco-Nomic Development)

Thursday, 30 May 2024, 16:00-16:45

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/297

Launch of the GovStack Knowledge & e-Learning Hub (ITU, Germany and Estonia)

Thursday, 30 May 2024, 16:00-16:45

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/286

Towards a better understanding of the interface between digital tech and the physical environment (The Digital Environment System Coalition, ICT4D.at & TaC-Together)

Thursday, 30 May 2024, 16:00–16:45
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/332

Key Issues discussed

This interactive session follows commitments made at WSIS 2022 and 2023 to provide updates on recent developments in research and practice at the interface between digital tech and environmental issues. It also provided a summary of DESC's contributions to the ITU's Partner2Connect (P2C) digital coalition, which focus on a basic toolkit that companies and organisations can use and thereby change the impact that their contributions to P2C will have on the physical environment.

- The session began with an overview of DESC's mission to change perspectives on the interactions between digital tech and the environment
- Examples of ongoing work in four areas were given:
  - ICT4D.at's Regenerative Ideas Contest
  - Deep Sea Mining environmental impact
  - How complex system and AI might help towards a better understanding of the interface between digital tech and the physical environment
  - YouthDESC

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

We recognise that WSIS plays an important role in bringing together people from many different sectors and backgrounds around a common agenda. However, to date there has been a dearth of rigorous attention in its discussions to understanding the balance between the positive and negative impacts of digital tech in a holisitic and comprehensive manner.

- The focus of the international community largely on climate change (and how digital tech can reduce carbon emissions) and more recently on e-waste is deeply problematic since it ignores many other significant harmful impacts of the use of digital tech on the environment
- DESC's holistic model provides a framework for understanding both the positive and negative impacts of digital tech on nature. DESC is committed to working collaboratively together with members of the ITU's Partner2Connect initiative to use this framework to examine and improve the environmental impact of initiatives developed within its orbit.
- Key areas where urgent research is required to examine the environmental impact of digital tech include outer space, deep sea mining, indigenous understandings, unusustaniable business models.
- We urgently need to start working on a new framework for understanding and evaluating the environmental impact of digital tech after 2030, and we commit to supporting initiatives through the WSIS process to achieve this.

Tangible outcomes (such as key achievements, announcements, launches, agreements, commitments, figures, and success stories)

- Progress has been made: we now have a framework through which countries, companies and organisations can rethink their impact on the physical environment (https://ict4d.org.uk/desc)
- We welcome contributions to a book we are developing that exemplifies the full range of issues considered by DESC that we are crafting in partnership with other organisations to provide the basis for a post-2030 agenda for digital tech and the environment.

Actionable plan and key recommendations

- We are committed to driving forward this crucial agenda on a day-by-day basis; failure to do so will have immense negative impact on the nature of the world in which we live.
- Our urgent request is that everyone involved in thinking about, crafting, building, selling, using and disposing of digital tech does so with their environmental impact uppermost in mind.
- We are currently seeking a new lead for @YouthDESC that we hope to have in place by September 2024 to drive forward our support for young people.

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

The environmental impact of digital tech is a critical issue for the future of humanity, but it is one that has largely been ignored within the WSIS framework to date. It would be good to consider "nature" and the "physical environment" as a key theme for next year's WSIS. We would be delighted to help the ITU and other UN agencies convene a series of sessions under this theme.

Biobanking and Digital Pathology in the Context of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (Science Summit at UNGA)

Thursday, 30 May 2024, 17:00-17:45

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/306

Ethical and Social Challenges in the Algorithmic Fabric (Estrategia Latino Americana de Inteligencia Artificial)

Thursday, 30 May 2024, 17:00-17:45

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/294

How do we ensure the internet delivers for everyone in twenty years' time? (UK Internet Governance Forum Steering Committee in collaboration with Identity Digital, DNS Research Federation and Rhizomatica)

Thursday, 30 May 2024, 17:00-17:45

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/308

Stocktaking exercise of the Global Digital Compact process and how to link it to the WSIS +20 process (Organisation internationale de la Francophonie)

Thursday, 30 May 2024, 17:00-17:45

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/339

Sustainable and Connected Transport - the future (virtual and physical) (University of Leicester)

Thursday, 30 May 2024, 17:00-17:45

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/240

Technology Enabling the Ageing Workforce - Actions and Solutions from Global Leaders (Junoverse)

Thursday, 30 May 2024, 17:00-17:45

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/304

Unpacking and Expanding Multistakeholderism in Practice (Global Network Initiative)

Thursday, 30 May 2024, 17:00-17:45

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/307

AI and Future of Cyber Capacity Building (Global Forum on Cyber Expertise)

Friday, 31 May 2024, 09:00-09:45

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/162

Computer and Mobile Digital Literacy for PwDs (persons with disabilities) (Ada Lovelace Software Private Limited, INDIA)

Friday, 31 May 2024, 09:00–09:45
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/149

Key Issues discussed

- Assistive Technology and Software solutions to Empower Children with Physical, Motor and Intellectual Disability.
- Artificial Intelligence and Assistive Technology to Empower Children with Disability.
- Lack of literacy, numeracy and cognitive development, sometimes allied to motor skills, impact the future with diseases, disabilities and the future of work, for person with disability.

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

- The educational platform SONIC AI brings children and women with disability, bring under the ambit of digital Inclusion.
- The common desire and commitment to build a people-centered, inclusive and development-oriented Information Society.
- Everyone can create, access, utilize and share information and knowledge, enabling individuals, communities and peoples to achieve their full potential in promoting the sustainable development and improving their quality of life.

Tangible outcomes (such as key achievements, announcements, launches, agreements, commitments, figures, and success stories

- Working in close association with Key2Enable in India, also plans to expand to entire South Asia.
- Collaboration, Co-Create, Synergies are absolutely necessary. Providing Disabled children with Assistive Tools and providing educational platform to schools, rehabilitation clinics, Hospitals in India on subscription basis are the major announcements and positive Commitments.
- SHG Technologies to work with Blinds, Mother of All disability

Actionable plan and key recommendations

- In addition to generating a positive impact and strengthening institutional ties this educational platform for disabled children provides greater visibility, accountability, publicity and admiration by the general public.
- By supporting a particularly humanitarian cause, it also opens up with this impact investment, the opportunity to qualify productive labor and, consequently, to increase the employability of Persons with Disabilities, in compliance with the Quotas Law

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

Social Impact of computing technologies- Reducing biases in AI, Empowering the Citizens, population with skills to equip to COVID-19 and future pandemic-preparedness, particularly in developing countries.

Generative AI in Education research study: Educators' Perspective (EduHarbor)

Friday, 31 May 2024, 9:00-9:45
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/168

Key Issues discussed

- The impact of Generative AI (genAI) on educators
- Potential impact of genAI on qualification, socialization and subjectification areas (outlined by G. Biesta)
- How we can assist and guide next generations through AI-integrated life

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

- The challenged that lie ahead can be greatly solved by cooperation and collaboration, co-learning and co-creating.
- It is crucial to keep the discussions going through WSIS Forum and other initiatives that promote equity and collaboration.
- Empowering women by giving them space to share and be supported is one of the highlights from this year's WSIS Forum.
- Putting people in the center of technology to reinforce the narrative of technology 'for people and by people', which promotes agency and accountability, as well as decision-making aimed at long-term improvements.

Tangible outcomes (such as key achievements, announcements, launches, agreements, commitments, figures, and success stories)

- Commitment to assist and guide younger generations in ethical and safe use of genAI.
- Commitment to improve our own knowledge and skills on genAI in education and overall.
- Agreement to better ourselves as individuals and as society to ensure safe, transparent and ethical AI usage.
- Commitment to life-long learning that requires flexibility and agility in learning, unlearning and re-learning.

Actionable plan and key recommendations

- Continue to develop our knowledge and skills to better understand how we can support young generations in the ever-increasing genAI use.
- Become informed about and engaged in the educational processes that are impacted by genAI and commit to actions that will support ethical AI implementation.
- Always keep in mind the main question of education: 'What's the purpose of education?' and its three domains outlined by G. Biesta as qualification, socialization and subjectification, encouraging an all-rounded development of learners.

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

What I have seen today in the form of women empowerment session on May 31 at 11am was very insightful and meaningful not only to me but many other women in the room. It would be great to continue encouraging women through positive reinforcements in the format of workshops where great women share their stories and best practices. Another point is holding youth tracks where youth initiatives, research and best practices can be showcased, and integrating this into main discussions throughout the forum. This will bring fresh ideas and passions that foster innovation, as well as ensure the long-term viability of the WSIS Forum. Additionally, involving people who lead educational institutions of all types and educate the next generations could bring light to issues and topics that are not otherwise highlighted in discussions but are crucial for establishing an informed well-functioning society in the age of emerging technologies.

Inclusive AI for a Better World, Through Cross-Cultural and Multi-Generational Dialogue (Globethics)

Friday, 31 May 2024, 09:00-09:45

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/166

Internet Universality Indicators: measuring ICT for development (UNESCO)

Friday, 31 May 2024, 09:00-09:45

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/163

Pioneering Responsible Global Governance for Quantum Technologies (European University Institute, Sciences Po, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization)

Friday, 31 May 2024, 09:00-09:45
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/164

Key Issues discussed

- Challenges and Opportunities of Quantum Technologies (QT): Examination of the disruptive potential of QT and the need to address both their benefits and associated risks.
- Responsible Global Governance: The importance of establishing robust frameworks for international cooperation to manage the sociotechnical challenges posed by QT.
- Socioeconomic Impacts: Addressing concerns about structural inequality and the uneven impact of QT on different regions and communities, ensuring equitable distribution of technological benefits.
- Safety and Security: Discussion on the critical need to prioritize safety, cybersecurity, and ethical considerations in the development and deployment of QT.
- Inclusive Frameworks for Cooperation: Emphasizing the creation of inclusive policies that facilitate meaningful international collaboration and equitable access to quantum technologies.
- Digital Public Goods: Exploring the role of QT in supporting access to digital public goods and services, and the implications for global digital inclusion.
- Stakeholder Engagement: The necessity of involving a diverse range of stakeholders, including governments, private sector, academia, and civil society, in the governance process of QT.
- Policy Recommendations: Presentation and discussion of the draft policy brief on "Advancing Information for All through Responsible Global Governance of Quantum Technologies," focusing on actionable recommendations to guide future governance efforts.

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

1. Emerging Trends

Rapid advancements in digital technologies, such as artificial intelligence, blockchain, and quantum computing, are transforming industries and societies. The expansion of broadband networks and mobile internet access, particularly in developing regions, is significantly increasing global connectivity.

2. Challenges

Persistent disparities in access to digital technologies and internet connectivity between urban and rural areas, and between developed and developing countries. There are also growing concerns over cybersecurity risks, including cyberattacks, data breaches, and digital privacy issues, pose significant threats to information security. Navigating the complex regulatory landscapes and ensuring coherent policies across different jurisdictions remains a significant challenge.

3. Achievements

The WSIS process has fostered greater international collaboration and multi-stakeholder partnerships, leading to more coordinated efforts in addressing global ICT challenges. Significant strides in capacity-building initiatives have empowered many communities and individuals with digital literacy and skills.

4. Opportunities

Opportunities to further bridge the digital divide through targeted initiatives that promote digital literacy, affordable access, and inclusive technologies, including through aligning ICT initiatives with the SDGs to harness technology for sustainable development, poverty reduction, and environmental protection.

Tangible outcomes (such as key achievements, announcements, launches, agreements, commitments, figures, and success stories)

- Pre-Launch of the Draft Policy Brief: Presentation and discussion of the draft policy brief on "Advancing Information for All through Responsible Global Governance of Quantum Technologies," providing a comprehensive framework for future governance efforts.
- Success Stories Highlighted: Sharing success stories and best practices from current quantum technology projects and collaborations, demonstrating the potential benefits and real-world applications of responsible quantum technology governance.

Actionable plan and key recommendations

- Initiatives for Inclusive Stakeholder Engagement: Create platforms and initiatives to involve diverse stakeholders, including underrepresented communities, in the decision-making processes related to global quantum technology governance.
- Enhance Capacity Building and Education: Invest in educational programs, awareness raising, and capacity-building initiatives to ensure various stakeholders have a broad understanding of quantum technologies and their implications, enabling informed participation in governance efforts.
- Foster Meaningful International Cooperation: Strengthen international collaborations and partnerships to address the global nature of quantum technology challenges, ensuring equitable access and shared benefits.

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

The WSIS Forum 2025 could include a dedicated track on "Quantum Technologies and Future Digital Governance," focusing on the intersection of emerging technologies and global governance. This theme could explore the ethical, legal, and socio-economic implications of quantum advancements, promoting interdisciplinary dialogue and collaboration. Key aspects might include cybersecurity in the quantum era, equitable access to quantum benefits, international regulatory frameworks, and the role of quantum technologies in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Such discussions would ensure that the global community is prepared to navigate the transformative potential of quantum technologies responsibly and inclusively.

WSIS at 20: Beyond "Tech Imperialism" (Information Technology and Innovation Foundation)

Friday, 31 May 2024, 09:00-09:45

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/147

Artificial Intelligence and E-Government: Opportunities, Challenges and the Future Landscape (ITO & IUST)

Friday, 31 May 2024, 10:00-10:45

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/186

Artificial Intelligence and its Regulation – Developments & Trends (Artificial Intelligence Law Hub)

Friday, 31 May 2024, 10:00-10:45

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/518

Celebrating Global Women Leaders in STEM Contributing to the SDG and a Sustainable Future for Humanity (eWorldwide Group)

Friday, 31 May 2024, 10:00-10:45
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/193

The eWorldwide Group launched a global initiative to empower women and girls through 'Reskilling and Right Skilling' in cybersecurity and AI so that they can reintegrate and actively participate in meaningful digital transformation.

This initiative will not only address the global gap of vital digital skills but also ensure that women drive and co-create the shared shape of the digital future with empathy, equity and humanity, to 'Leave No One Behind'.

DPI+H – Health for all trough digital public infrastructure (PATH & ITU)

Friday, 31 May 2024, 10:00-10:45
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/213

Key Issues discussed

- DPI-H is critical for promoting individual, public, and population health and, as a component of broader DPI, for promoting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) because health intersects with other sectors, such as education (e.g., health literacy), finance (e.g., financial services for health), agriculture (e.g., nutrition), and environment (e.g., environmental risks to health).
- Many low- and middle-income countries have made significant progress over the last decade in developing digital health governance structures, planning for digital health systems, and drafting and adopting digital health strategies and enterprise architectures that provide a backbone for digital health governance.
- However, countries still experience challenges implementing DPI-H, and there is more we can do as people working in the digital health space to strengthen the DPI-H/infrastructure approach globally and in countries.
- It is important to make sure that the focus is on solving a problem and not just focusing on doing DPI for DPI's sake alone. It is important to consider long-term financing for ongoing operations of any DPI, as well as emphasizing the ability to unlock data.
- DPI needs to be treated horizontally/cross-sectorally to scale rather than treated vertically just for health. This will set the enabling environment for DPI-H along with leadership, governance and regulatory capacity, health data governance capacity, and technical workforce capacity.
- An infrastructure approach to health can create a more efficient digital health ecosystem by leveraging a common set of open, widely scaled, relatively basic digital functions for health systems and aligning innovators, implementers, and governments around that approach. Cross-sectoral financing can help shift from massive upfront financing investments to funding for the long term.
- Convergence workshops can be ways to bring in multi sectoral buy in for fundamental work that is not health specific. Networks like AeHIN can help with figuring out what the long-term needs are.

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

There was a rich discussion in this session on how digital public infrastructure is a key part of building a healthy enabling environment for digital health, which is aligned with Action line C6. While progress has been made in that arena, more work can be done—especially to increase and align investments in the space to ensure DPI-H measures are sustained in the long-term.

Tangible outcomes (such as key achievements, announcements, launches, agreements, commitments, figures, and success stories)

- Speakers emphasized the need for a "mega-use case" for countries to rally around to push for their DPI-H. Egypt was cited as a great example where they used their universal health insurance as the driver to do the fundamental components of their DPI-H with identity, EHR, and payment systems.
- In a report developed in 2023 by PATH, Co-Develop, Vital Wave, with funding from the McGovern Foundation and Wellcome Trust, we explored how a DPI approach can be applied to digital health and offered a framework grounded in priority digital health interventions. The report was offered as a framework for the discussion. The recommendations from the report included:
  - Strengthen global ecosystem – support funding model for consistent core product development of identified DPI-H components to strengthen shelf-readiness
  - Strengthen global market of supporting DPGs – representative training data and open content
  - Operationalize health data security frameworks
  - Strengthen regulation and data governance
  - Strengthen country capacity to prepare for DPI-H implementation
  - Coordinate donor investments for implementation of multiple DPI-H components

Actionable plan and key recommendations

- AeHIN will consider using its country convergence meetings (which include MOH as well as finance, ICT, and other key stakeholders) as a forum to focus on DPI-H.
- WHO and other partners of GIDH will continue to support the initiative to ensure continuity of care, available supplies, health workers are paid, and universal health coverage. WHO is moving away from testing individual innovations to think about the broader system with DPI-H. DPI is not new, and health is now becoming more of a part of that, joining foundational DPIs with policies, governance, and capacity. WHO supports the full stack approach, and GIDH is key to that work.

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

Given the momentum around GIDH and its potential to unlock additional funding to lighthouse countries through its needs tracker, there may be an opportunity at WSIS2025 to invite voices from those countries to share learnings and challenges—particularly regarding investments focused on DPI-H.

Enhancing CSO participation in global digital policy processes: Roles, structures, and accountability (DiploFoundation)

Friday, 31 May 2024, 10:00-10:45

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/191

Shaping and inclusive global action to anticipate quantum technologies (Quantum Delta Netherlands)

Friday, 31 May 2024, 10:00-10:45

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/212

Achieving sustainable development by the 2030 Agenda by and with using science-underpinned standard model (Marchlewicz Marketing Management Agency)

Friday, 31 May 2024, 11:00-11:45

Please find the session details here:

https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/225

Children and Youth as Stakeholders in the Metaverse-Ethical Implications (Ethic Minds Institute)

Friday, 31 May 2024, 11:00-11:45

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/224

Digital Technology to Empower Visually Impaired Persons (SHG Technologies Pvt. Ltd, INDIA)

Friday, 31 May 2024, 11:00-11:45

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/226

ICT Based Changing Behaviours to embrace the green revolution (Universitat Autonoma de Barcelona, UNSPMF)

Friday, 31 May 2024, 11:00-11:45 AM
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/227

Key Issues discussed

- Clear communication
- Education
- Environment
- Sustainability
- Human behaviour

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

- Environmental education has come to be recognised as a pragmatic response to the issues posed by the environmental crisis and has taken shape against the backdrop of increased political initiatives to promote climate resilience with the full participation of all, including those from a diverse range of background, abilities and identities (United Nations Committee for Development Policy, 2018).
- The United Nations (UN) foregrounded the importance of education in combating the adverse effects of the environmental crisis in their Decade of Education for Sustainable Development initiative (2014) in which they emphasised the role of education in changing behaviours
- Tied to this aim is the desire for environmental education to be available to all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, ethnicity, religion, economic or social status (see United Nations' Sustainability Goals 4.5, 2015).
- This emphasis on inclusivity and diversity is particularly crucial because the effects of climate change are not uniformly felt across and within societies.
- Social disparity plays a significant role in amplifying climate vulnerability, particularly for those from lower socioeconomic backgrounds and those with disabilities. Currently, there are an estimated 15% of the global population has a disability (World Health Organisation), with people with disabilities "disproportionately vulnerable to natural hazards primarily as a consequence of social disadvantage, poverty and structural exclusion"
- Clear communication will enable people to make informed decisions about the development and conservation of their environment through inclusive environmental education is key to addressing the challenges of the climate crisis

Tangible outcomes (such as key achievements, announcements, launches, agreements, commitments, figures, and success stories)

- Establishment of an EU/Africa network for communicating environmental issues clearly : https://clear-climate.com
- Conference GDA 2024 https://webs.uab.cat/gda/

Actionable plan and key recommendations

- **Funding and resources:** allocate specific grants for developing educational materials and training programs that ensure accessible and inclusive environmental education. Funding is often a major barrier to implementing inclusive practices, as specialised materials and programmes can be costly. Research shows that targeted financial support can facilitate significant advancements in educational inclusivity and accessibility.
- **Training programmes:** invest in training opportunities that equip instructors with the skills to incorporate inclusive and accessible practices.
- **Curriculum guidelines:** establish clear guidelines that embed inclusivity into the environmental education curriculum at primary, secondary and third level.
- **Mandatory accessible environmental education:** introduce compulsory accessible environmental education at primary and secondary level, tailoring it to the needs of students.
- **Community partnerships:** encourage partnerships between schools, higher educational institutions and local communities to co-create spaces of dialogue and exchange.
- **Partnerships with organisations dedicated to diversity and inclusion:** encourage partnerships between schools, higher educational institutions and organisations dedicated to improving diversity and inclusion of marginalised groups.
- **Technology and accessibility**: ensure that digital educational tools are accessible to all students, including those with disabilities, offering them in multiple formats including digital, audio and braille. Learning materials should also be east to read.

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

Immersive environments to accelerate environmental education.

Legal trends that impact the information society (International Center for Not-for-Profit Law)

Friday, 31 May 2024, 11:00-11:45

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/216

Living with the genie: Responsible use of genAI in content creation (ITU)

Friday, 31 May 2024, 11:00-11:45
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/217

Key Issues discussed

Artificial intelligence (AI) has the potential to advance global prosperity by tackling critical issues that align with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Novel AI systems are continuously introduced to enhance creativity, innovation and efficiency of content creation and to elevate the overall performance of communications. A AI (genAI) is a field in AI that focuses on creating new content such as text, images, sound and video. genAI systems also bring a spectrum of risks and challenges specific to content creation. These include the potential for malevolent use of genAI in manipulating or distorting information and images, challenges in safeguarding privacy and protecting personal data and ensuring the integrity of the information disseminated. If not properly managed, these risks could harm the communicator/communicating organization, users and society. This session discussed some of the guardrails that should be put in place and to be observed by communicators for maximum benefit and minimum harm:

- Defined purpose, necessity and proportionality
- Do not harm
- Fairness and non-discrimination
- Human autonomy and oversight
- Inclusion and participation
- Responsibility and accountability
- Right to privacy and protection of personal data
- Safety and security
- Transparency and explainability

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

As "a publisher" on social media, what does responsible use of generative AI in content creation mean to you?
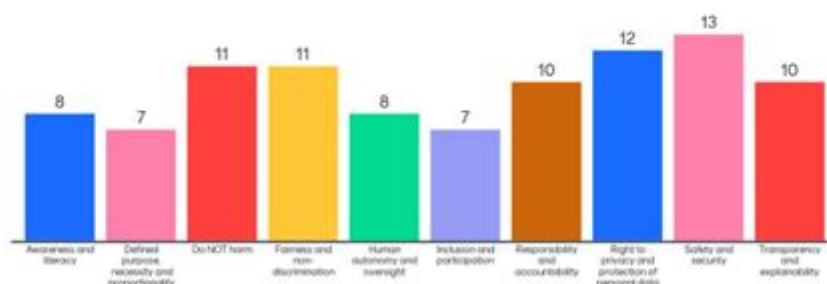
Tangible outcomes (such as key achievements, announcements, launches, agreements, commitments, figures, and success stories)

The discussions will inform the drafting of an ethical compass for the responsible use of generative AI in content creation by communicators (for ITU staff to begin with).

Actionable plan and key recommendations

- **Awareness and Literacy.** GenAI change some things, but the core method of content creation is the same. There are just more tools now in fields like research and illustration. AI has inherent biases; as such, it is necessary for it to be used as a springboard rather than the finished product. People need to supervise it. It can speed up writing and analysis, but we have to stay "AI literate" and be able to parse what is created by people and what isn't.
- **Defined Purpose, Necessity, and Proportionality and Human Oversight:** Principled innovation is important. Ensure that there is a real – justified - need, and understand that while failure is permissible, failure at the expense of others is not. Humans, their oversight, must be involved at every stage.
- **Do Not Harm:** The risks of AI are more important than the benefits. Generative AI can produce creative content, but this is as of yet an unregulated tool. Liability is increasingly becoming an issue, such as with the issue of deep fakes. It is necessary to make the perpetrators liable for the harm that they enact. However, it is next to impossible to use traditional methods of liability to do this. Should the producer, user, seller, or machine be held liable? The EU is attempting to address the issue.
- **Fairness and Non-discrimination:** Mitigating bias is important. On the input side, use training data that is diverse and representative via broad data collection from different populations. Data quality must also be very high, and it must be annotated and evaluated by, for example, medical professionals for health applications, to attempt to address bias. On the output side, evaluation is also critical, and governance and ethical standards are very helpful in curtailing the negative excesses of the output of large language models. Bias mitigation is an ongoing process that must itself be evaluated and updated over time as technology changes. The way to make algorithms less biased is to focus on reducing the bias of human input. The algorithm accurately reflects the way that the world is, which is why it is biased: it has no capacity to envision a better world.
- **Inclusion and Participation:** There are AI institutes that focus on addressing this issue in Vietnam, amongst other projects, such as "Made in Vietnam". Inclusion must be a part of high-level political discourse. As such, Vietnam is working on a national standard that focuses on evaluating and governing AI. Inclusiveness is an important criterion. Doing this protects minority groups from discrimination and promotes innovation.
- **Responsibility and Accountability:** Copyright law is different country by country. Some are using case law, some are using ethical principles. Fundamentally, it is difficult to prove providence when it comes to art, and this plausible deniability makes it very tricky to apply copyright law to AI.
- **Right to Privacy and Protection of Personal Data:** Things that happen online have serious effects in the real world. Large language models are commercial services that are controlled by private interests that want to exploit the data of consumers. As such, consumers can unwittingly concede data when they use these services.

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

Beyond the aspects already listed, what additional elements do you associate with responsible AI content creation? Type Answer

32 responses

human rights
thrustworthy   enforcement
tailored approach   ai in service of humans
environmental cost   right to know   duty of care
fairness   legislation   trust   regulation   if content was
accuracy   sustainability   accountability
created by human   adr   public space
advancing agency   ip   gender eqality   honest   ethical
transparency on datausage
originality   no filtering bubbles   bias mitigation
algorithmic transparency
respectful creativity

Volunteer computing for climate science, sustainable development and human health (University of Geneva)

Friday, 31 May 2024, 11:00-11:45

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/215

LEADERS TALKX

At the WSIS+20 Forum High-Level Event 2024, moderated Leaders TalkX took place on the 27th and 28th of May. These 14 sessions, moderated by High-Level Track facilitators nominated and identified by WSIS stakeholders, gathered High-ranking officials of the WSIS Stakeholder community, representing the Government, Private Sector, Civil Society, Academia and International Organizations.

The list of High-Level Participants is available:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/HighLevel

Leaders TalkX: WSIS towards the Summit of the Future/GDC and beyond

Monday, 27 May 2024, 14:00-14:30

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/400

Leaders TalkX: Forging Partnerships: Shaping the "Digital for Development" Landscape.

Monday, 27 May 2024, 14:33-15:00
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/372

High-Level Track Facilitator: Karen McCabe, IEEE

This Leaders TalkX session underscored the pivotal role of governments and stakeholders in driving ICTs for development. It emphasized the need for cooperation; the impact of effective participation of all entities; and provided examples of local and national strategies and actions.

Key observations from the session included:

- The recognition of the significant role of digital technology in development, notably in a rapidly changing world, as it provides opportunities for helping to improve socio-economic challenges; and how technology serves as means to uplift communities, drive innovation, and promote sustainable development.
- This journey toward digital development for good requires collective action and partnerships at both national and international levels.
- ICTs are more than connectivity or information access. They are not only about network coverage or service quality but seen as through the lens of a regulation or a strategy, they can help promote sustainability and their use for development to ensure that people can fully benefit from ICTs.
- More work needs to be done as in 2024, despite rapid advancement in the digital world, 2.6 billion people–approximately one-third of the global population–still are unconnected to the internet.
- There are rising challenges and opportunities with the introduction of technologies such as Artificial Intelligence.
- Green ICT is important as ICTs can help with climate and sustainability monitoring.

Examples of actions included:

- In Somalia, the Digital Inclusion Policy, aligned with the countries 201902024 National ICT Policy and Strategy, which encompasses working with local groups to improve healthcare, education, and financial access through technology and building 4600 kilometers of infrastructure to provide affordable internet, especially in rural areas.
- In Thailand, the Thailand 5G Smart Ports project aims to study the potential of smart port development by using 5G and green technologies, while preparing employees for digital transformation. In this project, three main semi-automated ports in Thailand are expected to transform into Green Automation ports by using 5G and green technologies for their port logistics.
- DCO's groundbreaking digital marketplace promotes multilateral partnership and cooperation within the DCO ecosystem, which facilitates knowledge exchange among DCO Member States, cultivating digital ecosystems, and enhancing capabilities for effective government transformation. The platform promotes the adoption of digital solutions to improve government operation and service delivery, foster economic growth, innovation, investment attraction, and job creation.

- The UN Internet Governance Forum Multi Stakeholder Group (MAG), progression and growth where it convenes over 9000 participants from around the world to address digital policy issues and provide action-based insights for addressing the complex challenges and opportunities presented by the digital age.

Leaders TalkX: The Connectivity Imperative: Laying the Foundation for Inclusive Information Access

Monday, 27 May 2024, 15:00-15:30

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/376

Leaders TalkX: Gateway to Knowledge: Empowering Global Access Through Digital.

Monday, 27 May 2024, 15:30-16:00
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/378

High-Level Track Facilitator: Ms. Lori Schulman, Senior Director, Internet Policy, International Trademark Association (INTA)

Session Overview

This session highlighted that access to information is not only about connectivity but the integrity and reliability of the information we receive online. The United Nations Representative set the context for the session by describing the current state of inequality in access and usage of the internet. The divides are particularly noticeable among men and women and urban and rural users. Women outnumber mail non-users by 17%. And urban users greatly outnumber rural users. 81% of Urban users have access to the internet. Rural users do not.

The issues of access are not limited to technical access. There are issues of language barriers and the quality of information that is found online. There are 10 Languages used on the Internet although globally there are over 7,000 languages. This is of particular concern given that the UN General Assembly has declared 2022-2032 the International Decade of Indigenous Languages. Further, the issue of misinformation is a key component of ensuring reliable access to knowledge.

Cuba responded by affirming that ICTs are the catalyst for social and political equality. Safe Access must be a priority of Government. There is increasing access to the Internet for personal and professional development. Cuba has made significant headway despite the limitations and challenges created by the Blockade. Cuba seeks to ensure accessibility to all in the digital space on a non-discriminatory basis. It has established a centre for intermediation for persons with disabilities so that all persons can be at the center of the country's digital transformation. Cuba seeks to create a more egalitarian society online.

Iraq's efforts have yielded a high number of Wi-fi users through the implementation of fiber optic chains, employing submarine cables and investing in connectivity infrastructure for others through Iraq. As a result, 3.5 million homes have fiber optics. Iraq is implementing licenses for 4G and 5G. They are promoting home use of 4G and other connectivity measures. Iraq has also implemented an electronic national identity program tied to electronic visas. All ministries have implemented and support a government network that allows internet access and affords free internet access to certain schools through public-private sector partnerships. 6000 official departments are now networked. Iraq has requested that the ITU focus on content on the internet as well as infrastructure. The issue of social media and respecting local society ethics is a big challenge for Iraq.

The Authority for Info-communications Technology Industry (AITI) Brunei-Darussalam noted that reliability of data continues to build trust and confidence in the digital world. Therefore, Brunei Darussalam is adopting Data Protection Directive for the use and processing of data by private sector and transfer across borders. Brunei-Darussalam continues its awareness and capacity building programs in this space. Cybersecurity Brunei has been established to address cybercrimes. Brunei-Darussalam has committed to align with the Asia Pacific Telecommunity (APT) 700 MHz band plan.

Access to information is one of main prerequisites to building a digital state and Estonia has been working on access to information laws for last 25 years. Estonia adopted legislation for government institutions to have websites and provide basic information. This legislation includes institutions like schools as well as government authorities. The challenge now is how should the Government manage personal data. There is also increasing reliance on AI in the provision of Government Services. Estonia is currently working on governmental chatbots and information services. This includes increasing public awareness of these services. Estonia is also providing global contributions in raising awareness as well.

Bangladesh NGOs Network for Radio and Communication (BNNRC) has been continuously engaged in the WSIS action lines since 2006. Action lines C1 – C11 have contributed to digital infrastructure and inclusivity. Global dynamics and global corporations create roadblocks to cultural consumerism, unsustainable and isolated interests. Civil rights in digital world being eroded by disinformation, misinformation, fake news and hate speech. Ownership concentrated and access limited to those who can pay for services. Important to promote diversity and cultures, licensing of copyrighted material, open-source software and content and a public digital infrastructure.

Costa Rica is focused on 5G implementation in rural areas. There is a first draft of a public enquiry document includes obligations to the winning bidder to focus on development of infrastructure in 134 high priority districts that currently have little to no connectivity. Information is a tool. Greater emphasis is being placed on Information Companies. Costa Rica is part of the Freedom Online Coalition of Governments (FOC). The FOC seeks to ensure that the challenges and opportunities relating to Internet freedom and digital technologies are on the policy agenda to drive concrete policy changes and outcomes, shape global norms to promote a rules-based, democratic, and inclusive world where human rights and fundamental freedoms are upheld in online and digital contexts.

In conclusion, the issues of physical infrastructure, equal access, quality of data, quality of content, language and social barriers are challenges that governments, the private sector, and NGOs encounter as technology accelerates. While we have a long way to go, the panel's interventions demonstrates that we have come a long way in providing gateways to knowledge at the local and global levels. The message is positive is despite the continuing challenges.

Leaders TalkX: Bridging the Skills Gap: Building Capacity for the Digital Age

Tuesday, 28 May 2024, 09:00-09:30
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/462

High-Level Track Facilitator:: Konstantinos Komaitis, Atlantic Council

There is imperative to ensure universal access to ICT skills and literacy for all individuals. We should emphasize the need for domestic policies integrating ICTs into education and lifelong learning, eradicating illiteracy through ICT programs, and promoting e-literacy skills. Additionally, it is important to highlight initiatives to empower disadvantaged groups, address gender disparities in ICT education, and enhance local communities' capacity in ICT use. The discussion about ensuring that people are digitally literal also underscores the importance of regional and international cooperation in capacity-building efforts and the role of volunteering in promoting ICT skills development.

Ensuring that every citizen has the required digital skills to actively and equitably participate in the digital economy is critical for the advancement of societies. There is an urgency in creating such capacity in order to bridge the existing divides. To do so, the infrastructure supporting communication technologies should be robust and resilient as well as affordable.

As the world looks towards 2030, it is imperative to accelerate programs and policies that provide the necessary initiatives for citizens to actively participate in digital skill development.

For the past twenty years, the WSIS Action Lines have been a compass towards achieving the ambitious goals that were set in 2003. The fact that we are now able to address the divides related to digital skills is because of the vision and commitment of WSIS. As we move forward with the Summit for the Future, as well as next year's WSIS+20 Review, it is important to remember the role that WSIS has played.

The renewed discussion about technology and development is creating a challenge on how to make sure that WSIS remains relevant. It also presents us with an opportunity to demonstrate not only its relevance but also its agility in adapting to the new digital realities.

Two priorities were identified:

- Cross-government and cross-stakeholder collaboration: bridging the divide on digital skills is not the job of one entity – it is a collective responsibility.
- Policy measures: governments should be enacting policy measures that seek to incentivise and create the conditions for people to want to participate. Education should start early on.

The renewed interest in the way technology facilitates development has presented both opportunities and challenges. Challenges include issues of infrastructure and, in particular, how robust the infrastructure supporting communication should be. Another challenge has to do with aligning under a coherent policy the various objectives to address issues of divide.

Both these challenges however present opportunities. The main thing is for policy makers to ensure they enact policies that provide the necessary incentives and are based on collaboration. They also need to view issues of divide more holistically and address such issues like infrastructure security.

Links to WSIS Action Lines and Sustainable Development Goals

Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.

    Related Action Lines:
5. C3: Access to information knowledge
6. C4: Capacity building
7. C5: Building confidence and security in the use of ICTs
8. C6: Enabling environment
9. C7 ICT Applications
10. C8: Cultural diversity and identity, linguistic diversity and local content
11. C10: Ethical dimensions of the Information Society

Goal 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.

    Related Action Lines:
- C2: Information and communication infrastructure: an essential foundation for the information society
- C3: Access to information knowledge
- C5: Building confidence and security in the use of ICTs
- C6: Enabling environment
- C7 ICT Applications
- C8: Cultural diversity and identity, linguistic diversity and local content
- C10: Ethical dimensions of the Information Society

Goal 9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation.

    Related Action Lines:
- C2: Information and communication infrastructure: an essential foundation for the information society
- C3: Access to information knowledge
- C5: Building confidence and security in the use of ICTs
- C6: Enabling environment
- C7 ICT Applications
- C8: Cultural diversity and identity, linguistic diversity and local content
- C9: Media
- C10: Ethical dimensions of the Information Society

Case Examples

- ITU/UNESCO: Giga Project
- Lithuania: No One is Left Behind
- Nigeria Communications Commission (NCC): Critical National Infrastructure Project
- Cambodia: Digital Skill Development Roadmap 2024-2035

Leaders TalkX: Securing the Digital Realm: Collaborative Strategies for Trust and Resilience

Tuesday, 28 May 2024, 09:30-10:00
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/473

High-Level Track Facilitator: Moira Whelan, National Democratic Institute

Key Issues discussed:

The cost of cybercrime has skyrocketed and a cyber attack happens every 30 seconds around the globe. New threats such as AI driven cyberthreats, scrambling to be ready for a post-quantum world as well as the physical security of subsea cables and satellite systems are rising.

The ITU Global Cybersecurity Index in 2017 stated that 128 countries lacked cybersecurity standards and 110 countries didn't have a cybersecurity strategy. This number reduced to 88 and 67, respectively in just 5 years.

Given the borderless nature of cyber security related incidents, international cooperation is increasingly vital in cultivating trust and internet regulators play a critical role in setting the tone for collaboration within governments to ensure confidence and security with the private sector and the public.

Sharing information among countries and regulators creates working procedures for resilience and lessons learned, which are essential for the success of trade and the prosecution of cybercrimes.

Cybersecurity collaboration at a high level brings information between different stakeholders, such as organizations, government agencies, industry associations, and security professionals. By pooling knowledge and resources, we can increase cybersecurity readiness and improve security measures.

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

Trust in the system is the most essential element of cybersecurity. Citizens must trust that the system not only works, but that their data is safe. COVID is an example of how much faith was lost in governments not simply from a health perspective, but also when it came to digital rights. The common element of enabling this resilience across governments are multistakeholder and collaborative frameworks.

Artificial intelligence is becoming a key factor in the transformation of the entire global society and plays a key role in improving IT security through analysis of large amounts of data to detect and prevent security threats. Challenges such as an insufficient number of experts and finances are an obstacle for small countries. Enabling the interoperability of the global system is key to allowing small countries to share resources.

Success Stories

Mutually Agreed Norms for Routing Security (MANRS) demonstrates what can be achieved with collaboration. MANRS is a global, community-driven initiative to improve the security and resilience of the Internet's global routing system that uses the Border Gateway Protocol (BGP). MANRS was created in 2014 by a small group of network operators who recognized the need to join forces to improve the system and has grown to a community of more than 1,000 participants. The MANRS community comprises network operators, Internet exchange points (IXPs), content delivery networks (CDNs), cloud providers, and equipment vendors who have committed to taking MANRS actions and reducing common routing threats.

The 5G Tactics programme focuses on the issue of cybersecurity and trust in 5G networks among several countries. The programme aims to foster cooperation between national authorities to include Montenegro and private service and equipment providers, in particular innovative European SMEs, network operators and specialized technology providers based on Open RAN

The Swedish government took steps to address Spoofing through advising telecommunications companies to block swedish phone numbers from abroad to prevent fraud. This has resulted in a significant number of phone numbers used in fraud to be blocked.

Tangible outcomes (such as key achievements, announcements, launches, agreements, commitments, figures, and success stories)

Achievement: Despite the arrival of more than a million new people from Ukraine into Poland in less than 10 days, mobile operators, with regulator's assistance, were able to ensure the smooth operation of services to a whole host of new customers by rapidly expanding network capacity. When people needed it most, reliable, safe and trustworthy connectivity enabled survivors–across borders–to respond and act in a crisis.

Achievement: The WSIS system enables regulators to stay on the cutting edge of technology. In Mauritius the ICT regulator developed a blockchain based license verification system as the risk of forged,fake or invalid ICTA licenses in circulation which are being used fraudulently is a reality. The Mauritian ICT regulator launched this new verification service so as to give added assurance to the different stakeholders and the public using licenses issued by the regulator. This verification system makes use of smart contracts on the Ethereum blockchain to store cryptographic proof of the ICTA licenses.

Actionable plan and key recommendations

Education of citizens is a key need. Most individuals don't know how to protect themselves online and more work must be done to empower people to protect themselves. Internet regulators must be at the center of this and address it in a multistakholder way. Sweden hosts Digital Today to inspire an increase in digital skills. It currently has 375 partners and goal for this year is 1 million partners working together to enable digital skills of citizens in all municipalities. Greater funding is needed throughout the world to address this issue.

SMS can be altered easily and is being used to mislead users to believe it is sent by an authority such as a government or a bank and regulators must. It is a key indicator or a space where regulators can't operate without the cooperation of other entities, but is a tangible and persistent problem that must be addressed to allow people to trust the technology and the system.

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

Although at its origin, the WSIS system did not conceive of many of the challenges identified, the open and collaborative process has allowed countries to quickly scale best practices to address emerging technologies in an inclusive, multi stakeholder fashion that is central to resilience and security. A greater priority should be placed on the role of regulators in this process and their responsibility to help grow the system, especially fostering Small and Medium providers access to tools and best practices and the essential nature of multistakeholder models increasing the security and resilience of countries' digital infrastructure should be elevated.

The topic of cable cuts–and the number of challenges seen in 2024– should be addressed in WSIS Forum 2025 as it illuminates the need to prioritize resilience and trust through the internet system itself. The ultimate objective is to get data to its final destination. The Internet works best --it is most robust-- when its many different, independent operators have many ways to achieve their goal through manifold connections. That makes the Internet more trustworthy in that its users can rely on it to be available all the time.

Leaders TalkX: When Policy Meets Progress: Shaping a Fit for Future Digital World

Tuesday, 28 May 2024, 10:00-10:30
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/497

High-Level Track Facilitator: Timea Suto, ICC

Introduction

The Leaders Talk entitled When Policy Meets Progress: Shaping a Fit for Future Digital World took place on Tuesday, 28 May 2024 and discussed the crucial importance of creating enabling policy environments to foster innovation, bridge digital divides, and enhance socio-economic development. The session saw a lively discussion with distinguished representatives of:

- ITU ;
- Ministry of Post and Telecommunications of Algeria;
- Telecommunications Regulatory Authority of Bahrain;
- National Communications Commission of Georgia;
- Federal Telecommunications Institute of Mexico;
- United States Department of State; and
- Commonwealth Telecommunication Organization.

The session kicked off with an overview of the topic delivered by ITU, highlighting the need to create synergies between all stakeholders, remain agile and flexible, and streamlline regulations to be able to create fit for purpose policy frameworks that help respond to the ever changing world of digital technologies and fully reap the opportunities they offer and address any potential challenges this rapid transformation may bring. Panellists then discussed how their countries and organizations approach the topic, what are some of the best practices and lessons learned for the broader WSIS community to build on, and what the road ahead looks like.

Vision

The session underscored the need for greater collaboration and multistakeholder dialogue. Participants emphasized the importance of a shared vision, common objectives and joint action across government agencies, the entire digital ecosystem and all impacted stakeholders to devise effective solutions and improve cooperation so that all can share in the benefits of the information society.

WSIS+20: 20 Years of Achievements, Challenges and Opportunities

Participants noted the WSIS+20 Forum as a significant milestone, offering the opportunity to renew commitments in line with the efforts and initiatives undertaken by the international community to advance the information society, and celebrate two decades of progress and achievement of the objectives set in the Geneva Plan of Action and the Tunis Agenda.

Towards the Summit of the Future / GDC and Beyond

The discussion highlighted the importance of reflecting on and taking stock of past achievements to inform future progress. They noted how WSIS, particularly the Geneva Plan of Action, provides an ambitious roadmap to leverage ICTs for sustainable development and social inclusion, highlighting the importance of international and multistakeholder collaboration and innovation. They noted the need to build on this roadmap in upcoming discussions at the Summit of the Future.

Fresh priorities

Participants stressed the importance of policies and regulations keeping pace with rapidly evolving technologies. This requires a nimble policy-making and regulatory process, embracing regulatory sandboxes, and fostering a culture of innovation that allows for testing and learning from both successes and failures. They also highlighted the need for awareness-raising, information sharing, and capacity-building initiatives to build trust among users, businesses, and governments.

Emerging trends

In sharing their own projects, initiatives and lessons learned, participants noted the need for:

- **Holistic view of the digital ecosystem:** Policies should foster investment, competition, and innovation in the development and deployment of broadband services and connectivity devices, with the aim of expanding affordable access. At the same time policies should facilitate investment in and enable the development of content and services that helps drive and sustain adoption, including through expanded e-government services. Governments should also invest directly in digital literacy and skills development.
- **Political will:** Strong, and forward-looking commitments are necessary only to set strategies and visions, but to effectively implement them and ensure long-term planning;
- **Agility:** Given the large variety of barriers to connectivity to be addressed, as well as the speed at which new services, players and business models appear, it is vital that regulatory regimes are flexible, forward-looking, adjust to rapidly evolving markets and encourage innovation. Regulators should focus on critical societal objectives and introduce flexible, light-touch approaches to achieve them, being cautious not to regulate prescriptively at too granular a level, which may limit the flexibility needed to consider or capitalise on innovative potential.
- **Evidence-based policymaking:** Policymaking and regulation should be evidence-based, transparent, inclusive of all stakeholders.
- **International cooperation:** The interconnectedness of today's world demands robust international collaboration to tackle digital challenges and opportunities that transcend borders. Participants emphasized that global cooperation is essential to address issues such as fostering trust and security, ensure cross-border data flows, and the interoperability of policy approaches and regulatory frameworks. Collaborative efforts can also facilitate the sharing of best practices and coordinated responses to global digital divides.
- **Multistakeholder approach:** A diverse and inclusive approach involving all stakeholders is crucial for effective digital policy-making. Participants highlighted that incorporating multiple perspectives leads to more comprehensive and resilient policy frameworks that are better equipped to address the complex and multifaceted nature of digital transformation.
- **Capacity building:** Participants underscored the need for continuous capacity-building initiatives that focus on digital literacy, technical skills, and regulatory expertise. This includes providing training and education programs to enhance the digital skills of the workforce, empowering individuals to use digital tools effectively, and equipping policymakers with the knowledge to craft informed and forward-looking regulations.

Opportunities

Participants in the session highlighted how access to ICTs and digital technologies and bridging the digital divides is not the goal in itself, but a means to unlocking broader development goals. Meaningful connectivity opens opportunities for economic and social growth such as financial inclusion, broad access to education and healthcare and improved avenues for public services to reach all citizens and enhanced entrepreneurship and growth opportunities for small businesses

Challenges

Participants identified several key challenges to creating an enabling policy environment for ICTs and digitalization. These include bridging the digital divide, particularly in developing countries and rural and hard-to-reach areas, and building trust in digital technologies. Policy and regulatory frameworks often lag behind rapid technological innovation, necessitating agile and adaptable regulations. Addressing these challenges requires coordinated efforts and international collaboration to maximize the benefits of digital technologies.

Links to WSIS Action Lines and Sustainable Development Goals

This session explored WSIS Action Line 6, and was also strongly linked with WSIS Action lines 2, 3 and 5 as well as all 17 SDGs.

Leaders TalkX: ICT Applications Unlocking the Full Potential of Digital – Part I

Tuesday, 28 May 2024, 10:30-11:00
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/472

High-Level Track Facilitator: Syed Mohammad Shaharyar Jawaid, Islamic Development Bank (IsDB)

Fresh Priorities:

The session highlighted fresh priorities of Government of Bangladesh evolving from Digital Bangladesh in 2009 to aspiring to become Smart Bangladesh Vision 2041, where Bangladesh plans to establish good governance, maintain accountability and transparency, promote innovation, and reduce inefficiency. The goal is to build a prosperous and happy Bangladesh, where technology serves as a catalyst for sustainable development and social progress.

Emerging Trends:

The Digital Agenda 2030 of Qatar outlines a comprehensive roadmap for Qatar's digital future, focusing on six key pillars: digital infrastructure, digital government, digital economy, digital technology, digital society, and a robust database system. These pillars will accelerate technology adoption, foster digital economic growth, enhance innovation, and deliver excellent government services, all while empowering our society to thrive in an increasingly digital world. Qatar is aspiring to become a global technology hub leveraging the latest advancements such as 5G networks, artificial intelligence, digital twinning, cloud computing, and big data.

Opportunities:

Republic of Iraq's efforts call for cooperation between the public industrial sector and the private sector in the field of technology to use artificial intelligence as a means. The government facilitates these partnerships through a wide range of joint research between key institutions and provides support and technical support to projects involved in the development of artificial technology. Moreover, the government is adopting technology transfer programs and converting academic subscriptions into marketable commercial services. This is done by providing financial and technical support to emerging companies and small pioneering projects that enable them to use artificial technology in their products and services.

Key Challenges:

ICT applications can provide benefits in many aspects of our lives: public administration, health, education, transport, culture, among others. However, there is one key aspect that needs to be considered to guarantee we all benefit from ICT applications: accessibility. Access to information and communication, which is directly linked to the Sustainable Development Goals, should be a driving force in digitalization. The needs of diverse users in terms of languages, cultures and formats should be considered. Some users communicate with spoken words, some with sign language, others with written text. However, access is still limited for persons with disabilities, language barriers or low digital literacy. In this context Academia initiatives like AccessCat play a key role. Academia can

contribute through education, research and knowledge transfer to build --quoting the first lines of the WSIS Declaration of Principles-- a "people-centered, inclusive and development-oriented Information Society".

Case Example:

Türkiye's National Mobile Alert System is an important part of the country's disaster management strategy, providing critical information to the public during emergencies. The system covers urban, rural, and remote areas nationwide and offers multilingual alerts to address various population groups. Authorized users send geo-targeted alerts to mobile devices over mobile operator infrastructure using methods such as the Commercial Mobile Alert System (CMAS), SMS, Cell Broadcasting (CBS), and Pre-Call Announcement. Real-time alert distribution provides immediate warnings in emergencies and continuous updates as situations evolve. The system integrates data from government agencies and real-time sources to ensure accuracy and relevance. Users can set the types of alerts they want to receive and their priority level, making notifications more meaningful and personally relevant. Geo-targeting ensures that users receive the most relevant information based on their location, enabling a more effective response to emergencies.

Leaders TalkX: Click to Govern: Inclusive and Efficient E-services

Tuesday, 28 May 2024, 11:00-11:30
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/470

High-Level Track Facilitator: Mei Lin Fung, People Centered Internet

Click to Govern was the original title of this session – but governments can only govern if they deliver services that practically serve the needs of their citizens. So renamed "Click to Serve"

Challenges for governments are high in providing good e-services that responsively meet citizens' needs:

- **Constantly improving reliable responsive eServices** ease of access/ease of use
- **Bridging divides** language & digital literacy, age, urban/rural, physical/mental spectrum
- **Serving all inclusively, appropriately and fairly** with Safety, Privacy, Dignity and Respect
- **Earning and keeping the trust** of citizens and their families, communities, businesses
- **Encouraging participation and engagement** with citizens by responsively receiving feedback
- **Finding the finance for building infrastructure for delivering e-Services**

Highlights in meeting these challenges

The **Philippines** is improving quality of life of citizens with "Bayang Digital ang Bagong Pilipinas"—the New Philippines is a Digital Nation – cutting redtape so citizen feedback quickly gets to the person who can act on it

Slovenia stands out for people-centered digital services increasingly responsive to the needs of underserved people like the elderly and differently abled, and proactively improving by sharing and learning with other countries.

Kenyan eServices show citizens they are valued and cared for. Integrating culture by practical public-private partnerships, the government creates awareness of digital opportunities by practically improving citizens' daily lives.

Senegal sets up regulatory sandboxes to participatively design, rapidly test and deploy secure eServices that strives to earn and keeps the trust of citizens by deep attention to local culture, values & responsively acting on feedback.

In conclusion, the increasing maturity of eGovernment in Asia, Africa and Europe is clearly demonstrated in this session devoted to WSIS Action Line 7. The value of the WSIS forum in bringing together countries from around the world to exchange practical stories of how they are addressing solving common challenges is enhanced by the structure of numbered WSIS Action lines – each country can find the specific issue they want to address and look at all the ways that countries are solving them. Each year at WSIS the encyclopedia of practice grows by hundreds of stories creating a practical playbook for digital transformation that speeds up success and reduces the wasted funds and frustration of trial and error. WSIS is a trading post and social network which delivers value all year around.

Leaders TalkX: Digital Advancing Sustainable Development: A trusted Connected World.

Tuesday, 28 May 2024, 11:30-12:00
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/507

High-Level Track Facilitator: Prof. Tim Unwin, UNESCO Chair in ICT4D

Introduction

This inspiring session brought together the following:

- H.E. Mr. Gobind Singh Deo Minister Ministry of Digital, Malaysia
- Dr. Konstantinos Masselos President Hellenic Telecommunications and Post Commission, Greece
- Dr. Mercedes Aramendia Falco Presidenta de Directorio Unidad Reguladora de Servicios de Comunicaciones (URSEC), Uruguay
- Dr. Charles Noir Vice-President, Community Investment, Policy & Advocacy Canadian Internet Registration Authority (CIRA)
- Ms. Lise Fuhr Director General European Telecommunications Network Operators' Association (ETNO)

These excellent speakers represented a diversity of views from governments, regulators, operators and Internet registrars from Europe, South America, Asia and North America.

Vision

Much has been achieved, but much remains to be done if we are to use digital tech sustainably to serve the needs of the world's poorest and most marginalised people and communities. At the heart of our future vision is the need to build trust between all those of good intent working with and through the Internet.

Digital infrastructure and networks of the future will be about the new services these networks will make possible – and as we progress towards offering new, complex, and socioeconomically transforming services, as we integrate these services in our day-to-day activities, the importance of cyber-security will truly shine to its full potential

WSIS+20: 20 Years of Achievements, Challenges and Opportunities

The oral and written presentations crafted for this session focused especially on the successe achieved by the countries and organisations represented, with highlighted examples noted below:

Achievements
- CIRA provides cybersecurity services to over 500 organizations across Canada and DNS and registry services to organizations globally.
- ETNO has championed a multistakeholder approach
- Uruguay is a leader in the adoption of renewable energy and is working on decarbonizing transport and industry, developing a green hydrogen economy, and making more efficient use of the electricity system

- Development of telecommunications infrastructures globally has seen extraordinary progress
- Important role played by the the technical community in advancing sustainable development.

Challenges (many of these are also opportunities)
- Continuing need to focus on meaningfull connectivity
- Cybersecurity is essential to protect networks, systems, and data, and to ensure trust in the use of digital technologies
- it is essential to distinguish between the coverage gap and the usage gap
- We need universal quality connectivity and affordable access to devices
- We need to do more to ensure that all genders can access and use digital tech safely, wisely and securely

Opportunities
- IGF Leadership working on the *Internet We Want* principles (whole and open, universal and inclusive, free-flowing and trustworthy, safe and secure and rights-respecting)
- Potential for, global DNS infrastructure in progress towards SDG objectives.
- Governments, academic, civil society, the private sector and the technical community—to continue to meaningfully shape the governance of global network
- Education and development of digital skills is essentiual – and offers many oportunities for new technology deoployments
- The future of employment requires new skills and retraining
- Regulation has to be adequate, adaptable, and flexible to facilitate and promote digital innovation, empowering people and putting them at the center
- In the European Union the investment needs to achieve the EU Digital Decade Policy Programme connectivity targets of 2030 are optimistically estimated to be larger than 200 Beuros – many opportunities for investment and deployment.

Towards the Summit of the Future / GDC and Beyond

The GDC was not a topic discussed explicitly, but there was an underlying current that any new processes should not reinvent the wheel. Existing processes such as WSIS, IGF and NETmundial seem to be working quite well. The lack of any detailed discussion on the GDC might suggest that its potential benefits remain unclear.

Fresh priorities

Much has been achieved, but greater (and more novel) emphasis could be placed on

- Conceptualising sustainability in terms of environmental, financial and social-economical sustainability
  - It is crucially important that we move beyond a "carbon" and "climate change" focus to a more comprehemnsive and holistic understanding of the interactions between digital technolgies and the physical environment
- Policy and regulatory action is required to address investment challenges and achieve digital infrastructure deployment targets
- Cybersecurity is becoming ever more important for trust to be maintained, and needs to become prioritised by governments, the private sector, civil society organisations and individual citizens.

Emerging trends

There are many emerging trends, but two seem to be particualrly important:
- For economic growth it is important to maximise the opportunitiues for competition. In principle the most important driver in a market remains competition as it creates incentives for innovation, investment in infrastructure and better services to consumer.
- AI and Quantum Computing provide very serious threats with respect to cybersecurity, but they also provides opportunities to mitigate these potential harms. Building trust is essential for ensuring that everyone can benefit from digital tech.

Links to WSIS Action Lines and Sustainable Development Goals

The session addressed most WSIS Action Lines and all SDGs (explicitly in one response) and especially quality education (SDG 4), economic growth (SDG 8) and climate action (SDG 13).

Case Examples

Many examples of good practices were shared, but two specific cases are worth noting:
- Plan Ceibal (Uruguay)
- European Commission White Paper "How to master Europe's digital infrastructure needs?" which introduces a number of regulatory proposals to address digital infrastructure deployment, to attract investment and foster innovation including.

Leaders TalkX: ICT Applications Unlocking the Full Potential of Digital – Part II

Tuesday, 28 May 2024, 14:30-15:00
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/511

High-Level Track Facilitator: Dana Ramadan, Access Partnership

Introduction

The panel discussion on "ICT Applications Unlocking the Full Potential of Digital - Part II" brought together experts from diverse backgrounds, sectors (public and private), and geographies to explore the impact of information and communication technologies (ICTs). The panelists delved into the opportunities, challenges, and emerging trends shaping the digital landscape, offering perspectives on how ICTs can accelerate sustainable development and drive societal transformation.

Vision

The overarching vision that emerged from the panel centred on harnessing the power of digital technologies to create a more inclusive and sustainable future. The panelists emphasized the need for global and local collaborative efforts among governments, the private sector, and grassroots communities to unlock the full potential of ICTs and digital public goods, fostering innovation and driving progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

WSIS+20: 20 Years of Achievements, Challenges and Opportunities

The panel reflected on the achievements, challenges, and opportunities that have shaped the digital landscape over the past two decades, from the perspective of their respective governments and companies.

Fresh Priorities

One of the priorities emphasized during the panel was the importance of digital public goods (DPGs), such as free and open-source software. DPGs (or digital public infrastructure) can accelerate digital and societal transformation by providing accessible and cost-effective solutions to address challenges. Other priorities include robust regulatory frameworks which are needed to ensure cybersecurity and responsible data handling in traditional industries transformed by ICT.

Emerging Trends

Several emerging trends are shaping the digital landscape, including the uptake of Internet of Things (IoT) in traditional industries, the increase in e-employment, and talent upskilling. The panel highlighted the transformative impact of these trends, enabling new business models, enhancing efficiency, and driving innovation. With that said, negative trends were also highlighted, such as the rise of disinformation through AI, the digital divide between urban centers and rural areas including skill-gaps, and challenges associated with remote work.

Opportunities & Key Challenges

The panelists emphasized the need for collaborative efforts and innovative solutions to address these challenges. The panel identified numerous opportunities presented by ICTs, such as access to essential services like healthcare and education, financial inclusion, and empowerment of employees and marginalized communities. While acknowledging the immense potential of ICTs, the panelists also addressed key challenges that must be addressed. These included talent upskilling, data protection and cybersecurity, and the persistent digital divide

- **International Collaboration:** The persistent digital divide and risks posed by tech misuse demand concerted efforts and international cooperation to ensure a socially just, ecological, and inclusive digital future for all. International collaboration is crucial to harness the potential of ICT for global development. The World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) is a key forum for such cooperation.
- **Private Sector Partnerships & Multistakeholder Engagement Framework:** While limitations exist in current models, innovative models of partnership with the private sector demonstrate the collaborative solutions required to drive meaningful change at the grassroots level. A need for a paradigm shift was thus highlighted, with an emphasis on a holistic, bottom-up approach grounded in local realities and inclusive multistakeholder engagement.
- **Challenges from the Industry Perspective:** Talent upskilling, data protection, and cybersecurity were identified as key industry concerns.
- **Digital Public Goods (DPGs) and the SDGs:** DPGs were highlighted as crucial opportunities for maximizing impact towards the SDGs. Benefits of DPGs:
  - Faster time to market for technology solutions.
  - Reduced risk.
  - Increased transparency through use of standardized products.
  - Scalability and reusability.
- **ICT Transforming Traditional Industries:** The Internet of Things (IoT) and robust infrastructure are key opportunities to drive ICT-enabled transformations in traditional industries.

Links to WSIS Action Lines and Sustainable Development Goals

The panel implicitly highlighted the strong links between ICT applications and the WSIS Action Lines, and explicitly, their contribution to the SDGs. It emphasized how digital technologies can facilitate progress in areas such as quality education (SDG 4), decent work and economic growth (SDG 8), and industry, innovation, and infrastructure (SDG 9).

Case Examples

The panel discussion was enriched by various case examples shared by the panelists.
Harnessing ICT for Socio-Economic Growth

- **India:** A thriving ICT sector is a cornerstone of India's growth strategy. Initiatives like Digital India and JAM trinity (Jan Dhan-Aadhaar-Mobile) promote financial inclusion, digital identity verification, and welfare delivery.
- **Germany:** The "FAIR Forward" initiative in Uganda exemplifies how digital tools can support green energy solutions and economic development, including empowering small business owners.

Telecommunications and the Rise of E-Employment

- **Portugal**: The national communications regulatory authority is taking measures to ensure reliable connectivity, promote competition in the telecom sector, and bridge the digital divide. Telecom infrastructure advancements like high-speed internet, 5G networks, and cloud computing are enabling the growth of e-employment and remote work.

Digital Public Goods

- India's national ID system (nearly 100% penetration)
- DHIS2 health information system (used in 75 countries)

Conclusion

The LeadersTalk 10 on ICT Applications Unlocking the Full Potential of Digital Part II explored the power of digital technologies and their potential to drive sustainable development. The panel emphasized the need for collaborative efforts, innovative partnerships, and a holistic approach to address challenges and unlock the full potential of ICTs. By leveraging digital public goods, fostering talent development, and ensuring inclusivity, the panelists envisioned a future where digital technologies create a more equitable, prosperous, and sustainable world for all.

Leaders TalkX: Looking Ahead: Emerging tech for building sustainable futures

Tuesday, 28 May 2024, 15:00-15:30
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/515

High-Level Track Facilitator: Dr. Liberato Bautista, CoNGO

This Leaders TalkX theme was "Looking Ahead: Emerging Tech for Building Sustainable Futures. The session reaffirmed the WSIS Principles and Lines of Action as main reference points for global digital discussions, especially in developing and using emerging technology to build sustainable futures. The panel was reminded of 2024 and 2025 being pivotal for the governance of the internet, artificial intelligence, and other emerging technologies. These were evident across the interventions by all six high-level speakers from governments (3), from the United Nations (1), and from civil society (2), who touched upon the session theme's multiple aspects.

The moderator impressed the panelists and the audience with the fact that the title of the high-level session indicated not just a singular future but of futures—in the plural. He then underscored that none of us have a franchise of the future—not in our imagining and not in our acting. But imagining and acting together on our "futures," not the least through multistakeholder processes like WSIS, is most desirable to understand better what the future holds about technology, digital futures, and more.

The intersections of ongoing intergovernmental processes were spotlighted, particularly the negotiation of the texts for the Global Digital Compact, the Pact for the Future, and the Summit of the Future, just ahead of 2025's WSIS+20 review. It was pointed out that these processes leading to digital governance are "increasingly complex and politically charged." Even as various stakeholders are grappling with the fast-moving emergence of ICTs, lagging is the governance architecture that is crucial in technologies that equally have the potential to undermine the cultural diversity, social fabric, and cohesion of society. (Wallonie-Bruxelles, The UN Brief), Netherlands)

The universality of human rights and their protection and safeguarding—online and offline—were underscored as crucial principles for all digital technologies and internet governance. Aside from human rights, other ethical dimensions of ICTs were addressed variedly by the panelists. The warning was sounded out that "the ethos of breaking things and moving fast has to be put to rest, as we have seen how it breaks our societies, from the divisiveness of our online public square to the pollution of our ecosystems with online toxic exchanges and dissemination of mis- and disinformation, that spill to the real world."(Netherlands, Belgium, The UN Brief)

The panelist presentations underscored the transformative power of information and communication technologies, which have profoundly changed and impacted how various sectors of society work and deliver their goals. This includes the governance aspects of already available technologies and emerging ones and their use and application in fields like education, aging, healthcare delivery, health research, gathering news and distributing information, and culture and the arts. Innovations and strategies in artificial intelligence are plentiful, and national and global governance mechanisms must be implemented now rather than later. Even as AI is being developed, incentivized by its potential to transform (improve) economies, and portrayed as a social good, it is desired that these strategies square with principles already enunciated by WSIS, particularly the Tunis principles. The panel was made aware that cultural diversity must be factored into the roles assigned to technology, especially

AI and other emerging technologies. An example was given: AI development and use present numerous opportunities for the cultural sector, starting with generative AI tools for artistic creation. Still, significant discoverability issues (the ability of online content to be discovered) of cultural content exist, which influence multilingualism and cultural diversity. (GCOA, India, Netherlands, Wallonie-Bruxelles)

The panelists collectively emphasized a robust public-private partnership, a cornerstone of collective efforts needed in both governance (policy) and implementation. Such partnerships, however, must enhance and uphold the multistakeholder partnerships that ITU has modeled in conducting the business of the WSIS Process. This resonated with the Tunis principles of "effective cooperation among governments, the private sector, civil society, the UN, and other international organizations, each according to their different roles and responsibilities, and leveraging their expertise. (UNJSPF, Netherlands, The UN Brief)

This multistakeholder partnership that WSIS already models is also enhanced by broader geographic collaboration (i.e., interregional), ensuring that strategies to address complex issues related to emerging technologies benefit from a variety of perspectives, ensuring inclusivity which is essential in the development of robust and adaptable policies that can withstand the test of time and technological innovation. But this "variety of perspectives" is under attack by emerging technologies (Generative AI) that undermine public interest in news media organizations and when multilingualism is not promoted in social media applications, including those using AI. The audience was made aware that "the referencing methods on search engines and platforms may already tend to reinforce the visibility of linguistically majority content, therefore in English." (Netherlands, GCOA, The UN Brief, Wallonia-Bruxelles)

This panel highlighted the urgent need to incentivize innovation in ICTs, underlining their crucial role in shaping sustainable futures. The digital frontier, largely uncharted and expansive open for exploration, if not also abuse and mis- and disinformation, is a minefield for innovation and the emergence of ICTs. (India, GCOA, The UN Brief)

Leaders TalkX: Ethical Dimensions of the Information Society

Tuesday, 28 May 2024, 15:30-16:00
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/498

High-Level Track Facilitator: Jennifer Chung, DotAsia Organisation

This session looked at universally held values and ethical dimensions into the digital and focused on collective responsibility of all stakeholders to foster an Information Society that champions the common good, safeguards privacy, and actively combats abusive and discriminatory behaviors enabled by digital technologies.

The panelists highlighted the importance of awareness and education in the use of digital technologies and discussed the implementation of laws and preventive measures to ensure a respectful, secure digital environment.

Key takeaways:

UN Representative: Mr. Sameer Chauhan, Director, United Nations International Computing Centre (UNICC).

UNICC noted that ethical use of ICTs needs to be operating in a secure digital environment under the highest security guarantee, and innovation should be facilitated while keeping cybersecurity front and center in frontier technologies. UNICC has recently launched a cybersecurity fund for the UN family to ensure that all UN systems have a consistent level of cybersecurity measures.

Russian Federation: H.E. Mr. Grigoriy Borisenko, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Digital Development, Communications and Mass Media

The Russian Federation has a National AI Development Strategy for up until 2030 which establishes general ethical principles and standards of behavior that guide voluntary signatories (360 organizations and counting) in the field of AI. The country uses a concept of hybrid regulation (some issues are resolved by regulations, others by means of "soft" law) and has already approved 13 experimental legal regimes in the field of operation of drone systems and unmanned vehicles, as well as in the field of healthcare.

Republic of Korea: Dr. Kyoung Yul Bae, President, Korea Information Society Development Institute (KISDI)

Dr. Bae contrasted the European approach on tight AI regulations on ethical dimensions versus the American non-regulatory approach which favors AI innovations and business. For the Republic of Korea, the country is ready to enact ethical regulations, in a more focused manner on specific segments, e.g. self-driving cars, generative AI, manufacturing parts, small and big entrepreneurs.

UN CSTD Vice-Chair: Ms. Ana Neves, Vice-Chair, United Nations Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD)

The CSTD Vice-chair highlighted that ethics is about responsibility and integrity, and informs responsible solutions for critical challenges in policy, regulations, and designing functional ICT strategies. In addition, public policy has to ensure every stakeholder in the design and development of intelligent and autonomous systems is educated, trained and empowered to prioritize ethical considerations. Empowerment is key for citizens and also for institutions. Common values and principles from UNESCO, EU, OECD, WEF, Council of Europe, IEEE, Netmundial+10 highlight using the multistakeholder approach in digital transformation to maximize digital policy processes for the common good.

Costa Rica: H.E. Mr. Hubert Vargas Picado, Vice Minister of Telecommunications, Ministry of Science, Technology and Telecommunications

Costa Rica shared two pivotal initiatives: The National Cybersecurity Strategy - a comprehensive public policy document that articulates a strategic vision for cybersecurity via an efficient institutional model and fostering the engagement of all stakeholders. The pending National strategy for AI - which will allow Costa Rica to enhance the well-being of its citizens through the prudent application of frontier technology. Costa Rica strives to ensure free access to information, promotes digital literacy and civic participation through online platforms, and full connectivity for indigenous populations before 2030.

Leaders TalkX: Partnership Pivot: Innovating International Cooperation to Scale Digital Inclusion

Tuesday, 28 May 2024, 16:00-16:30
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/498

High-Level Track Facilitator: Helen Harris, Amazon

During this session, speakers raised the following points:

- Digital transformation is a multidisciplinary activity. As such, its implementation requires cooperation and collaboration from various departments (across the UN / within governments).
- Furthermore, digital inclusion is not limited to merely access to digital technology, but also a matter of ensuring that individuals have access to digital spaces in their local languages. This provides access to information, empowers local communities and integrates their insights into global discussions, thereby catalyzing local innovation and development.
- The multi-stakeholder process remains a priority and a key mechanism for international cooperation on digital issues. The importance of WSIS—including IGF—has not changed, and these frameworks should be leveraged for the implementation of the GDC. The IGF, given its multi-stakeholder nature and its adaptability—is the right place to have global, inclusive, human-rights respecting discussions about governance of the Internet and digital technologies. Multistakeholder spaces, such as IGF and ICANN, bring together diverse perspectives and ensure that digital policies benefit from a broad base of expertise and meet the varied needs of global users.
- Industry plays an important role, as it is a key player in the development (and deployment) of technology and services. Consequently, it is necessary to deepen the involvement of industry in promoting international cooperation. But in order to secure industry's active participation, government's need to develop flexible, technology-neutral regulatory frameworks that encourage investment and innovation.

Leaders TalkX: Local Voices, Global Echoes: Preserving Human Legacy, Linguistics Identity and Local Content in a Digital World

Tuesday, 28 May 2024, 16:30-17:00
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/504

High-Level Track Facilitator: Ms. Daniella Esi Darlington, Copianto AI

Fresh Priorities:

- Empowering local content creators to develop content in indigenous languages to preserve cultural diversity and history: H.E. Ms. Rose Pola Pricemou, Minister, Ministry of Posts, Telecommunications, and Digital Economy.
- Digitalizing local archives and cultural content to make them accessible online: (H.E. Mr. Ousman A. Bah, Minister, Ministry of Communications and Digital Economy)
- Developing multilingual tools and platforms to facilitate cultural and linguistic diversity
- Integrating local languages into education sector curriculum to promote linguistic identity: (The Gambia)
- Continuing collaboration with partners to develop human capital for local content and digital solutions in local languages: (The Gambia)
- Organizing global conferences on language technologies to address the linguistic divide in the digital age: (Tawfik Jelassi, Assistant Director-General for Communication and Information, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO))

Emerging Trends:

The vast majority of the world's languages are missing from the digital world. While there are over 7,000 languages spoken globally, only a handful are currently represented online. UNESCO's Tawfik Jelassi emphasized this gap. To bridge the divide, speakers from Gambia, India and Denmark proposed using technologies like artificial intelligence and machine learning to digitize archives, translate content, and develop tools that make local languages more accessible online.

Opportunities:

Digitizing local content and indigenous manuscripts can help preserve cultural heritage. A key theme that emerged across various speakers was the importance of promoting multilingualism in the digital space. Prof. NK Goyal from India specifically emphasized this point, along with the need for creating digital content in local languages and facilitating access to digital tools and infrastructure for local communities. He also highlighted the importance of collaboration, raising awareness and leveraging communication channels. Ms. Dana Northcott, representing the International Trademark Association, provided an international perspective. She discussed the importance of multi-stakeholder collaboration, including efforts by ICANN (Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers) to expand the use of non-English characters online. This highlights the need for international cooperation to create a truly inclusive digital space.

Key Challenges:

- The large linguistic divide that exists digitally, with only a few dozen languages present online while over 7000 languages are used globally. This poses a major challenge to inclusion.
- Homogenization of online content, with most content produced in a few dominant languages, posing a threat to cultural and linguistic diversity.
- Lack of local language content and tools, making internet access difficult for those who don't speak dominant languages.
- Risk of certain indigenous and minority languages becoming endangered or extinct if not preserved digitally.
- Heavy consumption of foreign content in some countries poses challenges to promoting local cultures and languages.
- Gender biases and online harassment amplified by technologies, disproportionately impacting women.
- Potential for "meta life" to blur boundaries with real life and shape public perceptions in harmful ways.
- Ensuring local voices and perspectives are reflected in technology development and policymaking to avoid marginalization.

Case Example:

- UNESCO initiatives like creating a word atlas of languages, promoting multilingualism, and organizing a global conference on language technologies.
- Guinea developing multilingual tools/platforms, regulating content, digitizing archives, and promoting local creators.
- The Gambia prioritizing digital library, integrating local languages in education, and promoting indigenous digital solutions.
- India's government has built the Bhashini-Translation's ASR software to simultaneously translate content into local languages globally.
- Denmark promoting local perspectives to shape digital futures and ensure diversity online.
- INTAs advocacy for universal acceptance of non-ASCII domain names to enhance accessibility.
- Technological advancements like AI/ML to digitize archives, translate content, and develop local language tools.
- Countries like Gambia and Guinea are taking a proactive approach to bridge the digital divide. They've implemented national policies emphasizing inclusive connectivity, digital literacy, entrepreneurship, and local content development For instance, Gambia's Entrepreneurship Policy and the ICT Agency Act 2019 both prioritize the development of local digital solutions and content, ensuring their citizens have access to information and tools in their native languages.

HIGH-LEVEL DIALOGUE

DPI High-Level Session (ITU, Germany and Estonia)

Monday, 27 May 2024, 16:00-17:00

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/335

International Standards: A Commitment to Inclusivity (ITU)

Monday, 27 May 2024, 16:00-17:00

Please find the session details here:

https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/494

Partner2Connect High-Level Panel (Partner2Connect)

Monday, 27 May 2024, 17:00-18:00

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/337

Space for Sustainable Development: the case of connectivity (ITU)

Monday, 27 May 2024, 17:00-18:00 PM
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/491

Key Issues discussed

- How to address lack of technical expertise in satellite technology
- Ways to address connectivity gaps, notably in remote areas (rural-urban divide)
- Ways to achieve universal connectivity at affordable prices (including by assessing the costs of not being connected)
- Convergence between terrestrial and satellite networks
- Radio spectrum management as an enabler of more connectivity options
- Space sustainability and management of outer space as global commons
- Technological autonomy
- Policy and legal aspects of transitioning between various telecom legal frameworks

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

- Achievements: several satellite systems are now used to provide connectivity to underserved or unserved communities but also to geographical areas otherwise not connectable
- Emerging trend: increasing integration, beyond geographical complementarity, between terrestrial and satellite connectivity systems
- Challenges: lack of technical expertise, financial constraints, how to achieve optimal policy frameworks
- Opportunities: use the WSIS framework to share information and discuss about policy and regulatory frameworks

Tangible outcomes (such as key achievements, announcements, launches, agreements, commitments, figures, and success stories)

Success stories:
- Connect Angola to provide connectivity to remote areas in Angola
- Unico Demanda Rural to guarantee a broadband service offer with a download speed of 100 Mbps for all households and at an affordable price (35 € per month) in remote areas of Spain where operators have not deployed their networks
- EDUSAT to use satellite connectivity for distant class room education from school level to higher education in India

Actionable plan and key recommendations

- Increase offer in capacity building related to satellite technologies
- Work on metrics for affordable connectivity for all (consumer price is important but opportunity costs for governments should also be taken into account)
- Focus on challenges to legal and regulatory frameworks brought by new satellite technologies
- Include sustainability in the consideration and development of ICTs
- Maintain, encourage and foster multi-stakeholder cooperation in the field of ICTs

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

- Instead of a session focusing on satellite connectivity, include satellite technologies in several thematic sessions about services/applications requiring connectivity to show how they can also deliver such services
- Satellite remote sensing and Earth observation for sustainable development
- Space sustainability

Leading in the Digital Era: How can the Public Sector prepare for the AI age? (UNESCO)

Tuesday, 28 May 2024, 10:00-11:00

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/460

Smart City Leaders' Talk (Global Cities Hub (GCH) and WeGO)

Tuesday, 28 May 2024, 13:30-14:30
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/229

Key Issues discussed

- Digital tools for human rights-based sustainable smart city development
- Principles of building people-centered smart cities
- Crucial aspects of digitalization and smart city development at implementation phase
- Right balance between technology-driven process and people-centered approach
- Complexity of smartness: people, economy, infrastructure, governance, etc.
- How an inclusive international governance framework can make sure that smart city development benefits all and leaves no one behind,

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

- By connecting LRGs to the work of the ITU, Mayors and city representatives have contributed to strengthening the multistakeholder dimension of WSIS, which is one of its defining features.
- LRGs have competencies in key areas of digitalization, including the different layers of smartness: people, economy, infrastructure, governance.
- The contributions by local and regional governments are mostly link to WSIS action lines C1 - the role of governments and stakeholders in promoting ICT for development.
- Smart city leaders emphasized the importance of capacity building (WSIS C4) by identifying gaps in capacity of local government staff and areas that require improvement to accelerate digitalization of local services.
- The question of protection of data from the citizens and the ethical use of AI in cities are high on the agenda of local leaders, reflecting on action line C10 - ethical dimensions of the information society.

Tangible outcomes (such as key achievements, announcements, launches, agreements, commitments, figures, and success stories)

- Highlighting different aspects of smartness, including but not limited to fulfilling human rights, strengthening social inclusion, advancing climate adaptation and resilience, as well as presenting successful smart city projects was important to inform and influence policy making and regulatory processes.
- Discussing how innovation, digitalization and ICT can help cities, communities and their leaders address challenges related to urbanization – like citizens' digital literacy, climate adaptation and resilience, modernizing and delivering municipal services, promoting equal access, etc. – can ignite new ideas and forge new partnerships.

Actionable plan and key recommendations

- We need to provide a dedicated space to Local and Regional Governments in general and Smart City Leaders in particular to give rise to a more inclusive multilateralism and better access to digitalization for everyone, everywhere.
- Given their proximity to the population, their knowledge of the local contexts, their capacity to work through a multi-stakeholder approach, LRGs can contribute to the renewed framework for global digital cooperation with a vision to build people-centric, inclusive, and development-oriented information and knowledge societies.
- The dialogue between international organizations (ITU, OHCHR, UN-Habitat) and LRGs is crucial to develop the right global policies which can be successfully implemented at the national and local level. A mindful matching of technology's offers and the citizens' real needs is the only successful and sustainable way forward.
- Applying a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach is conducive to a better outcome. It benefits both States and LRGs in addressing the challenges of digitalization and harnessing its potential at all levels. Therefore, we recommend facilitating a better involvement of LRGs that would also help ITU and the international community to better understand the challenges on the ground.

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

Based on previous fruitful commitments of Local and Regional Governments to the WSIS process and their significant contribution on key issues of importance for their populations, the Global Cities Hub suggests that States consider a more formalized engagement of LRGs in the future by creating a permanent 'Forum of Smart City Leaders' as a platform for mayors and city leaders to explain the several layers of smartness of a city and community (people, infrastructure, economy, governance, etc.), voice their daily needs and concerns, present their recommendations for whole-of-government efforts, and contribute to global policy-making.

Trust in Tech: Navigating Emerging Technologies and Human Rights in a Connected World (ITU, OHCHR, ISO & APC)

Tuesday, 28 May 2024, 15:30–16:30
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/246

Key Issues discussed

- The integration of human rights considerations into technical standards.
- The importance of technical standards in ensuring interoperability, safety, accessibility, affordability, and sustainability of digital technologies.
- The necessity of multi-stakeholder collaboration in developing inclusive technical standards.
- The human rights challenges posed by emerging technologies such as AI
- The role of regulator in embedding human rights into national policies

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

- Trend: Growing emphasis on embedding human rights into technical standards development.
- Challenge: Ensuring inclusivity and equitable participation in standards development, particularly for stakeholders from developing countries.
- Achievement: Increased collaboration between standard development organizations, OHCHR and civil society to integrate human rights considerations.
- Opportunity: Strengthening interdisciplinary collaboration to bridge the gap between technical and human rights communities, and policy makers

Tangible outcomes (such as key achievements, announcements, launches, agreements, commitments, figures, and success stories)

- Launch of initiatives to integrate human rights into technical standards.
- Need to translate human rights into technical terms to integer human rights into technical standards
- Need to build the capacity of technical communities concerning human rights
- Recognition of the need for increased involvement of civil society organizations in the standardization process.

Actionable plan and key recommendations

- Underline the necessity for collaboration between standard development organizations, civil society organizations, and OHCHR to ensure human rights are embedded in technical standards.
- Promote awareness and understanding of the human rights implications of technical standards among all stakeholders.
- Encourage broader participation from diverse and interdisciplinary experts in the standardization process.

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

The WSIS Forum 2025 should include thematic discussions on the intersection of emerging technologies and human rights, with a focus on practical approaches to embedding human rights into technical standards. Special emphasis should be placed on the necessity for collaboration between standard development organizations, national regulators, civil society organizations, and OHCHR.

Additionally, sessions should highlight the role of organizations like ISO, APC, ITU and national regulators in promoting human rights in digital policies, showcasing success stories and best practices from different regions and sectors.

WSIS Roundtable discussion: Small States towards meaningful connectivity: lessons learned & future perspective (Lithuania and Singapore)

28 May, 15:45 – 16:45 (UTC+02:00)
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/464

Key Issues discussed

- 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

- 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; publicprivate 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)

- 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

- 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

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.

KNOWLEDGE CAFÉ

WSIS+20 Visioning Challenges – WSIS towards the Summit of the Future/GDC and beyond

Monday, 27 May 2024, 12:00-14:00

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/346

IEEE Knowledge Café: Knowledge Sharing for Sustainable Development

Wednesday, 29 May 2024, 12:00-13:30
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/348

This open and interactive dialogue discussed a future state where the Sustainability Commons is now a go-to-platform, a digital knowledge commons, for the collection of information on Climate and Sustainability Technology. Participants exchanged recommendations and ideas that can help initiate building and maintaining a sustainability commons initiative.

Discussed key benefits and advantages of this future platform included:

- A common, standardised, agreed-upon method to collect and access information to support a circular economy that is open to all stakeholders
- A collaborative source and trusted model that provides access to information that saves time and energy in individual's and community's efforts to implement a greener future, and that everyone can learn from
- An open resource for all stakeholders to have equal opportunities to access information for implementing sustainability in their lives

Discussed potential key challenges of maintaining such a model included:

- Uncertainty around the platform's governance process, accountability and financial liability, and the need for "checks and balances."
- The fact that a sustainability commons could be interpreted and approached differently by different communities/cultures/countries.
- How would such a Commons be supported (i.e., infrastructure) and by what bodies/organisations?

Discussants concurred that:

- In order for stakeholders from diverse backgrounds and sectors to collaborate, modern technology tools (such as AI) could be used to improve communication.
- The Commons would have to allow cross-fertilisation and inclusive recognizing the need for diverse solutions so they are relevant to different cultures and regions.
- Training and education would be needed so there is sustainable and ongoing stewardship of the Commons.
- Critical success factors and strategies for fostering community engagement and ownership of a Sustainability Commons over the long-term include education around the dynamics of individual/collective behaviour on sustainability, and the need for incentives (financial, knowledge, role models).

WSIS Stocktaking Achievements and Success Stories

Thursday, 30 May 2024, 12:00-14:00
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/478

Key Issues discussed

- Announcement of finalists and winners of the WSIS Healthy Ageing Innovation Prize 2024 and the WSIS 2024 Photo Contest
- Launching of WSIS Stocktaking reports, including the WSIS Stocktaking 2024 Global Report, WSIS Stocktaking 2024 Success Stories, and the WSIS+20 Stocktaking Report
- Interactive discussions among the audience. The key questions are as follows:

  - How have you engaged in the Stocktaking process and how has that engagement contributed to your progress?
  - Based on your experience, what makes the WSIS stocktaking process valuable?
  - With the new technology emerging like AI, Block chains, how can WSIS Stocktaking Process serve better? / What should we improve to make the Stocktaking process more effective and valuable?

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.

- Looking towards 2025, the WSIS Stocktaking needs to play an increasingly important role.
- The existing cases and success stories from WSIS Stocktaking database and WSIS Prize should be utilized effectively to promote best practices and motivate stakeholders to engage in WSIS actions.
- Stakeholders should be continuously encouraged to actively submit WSIS Stocktaking projects, fostering greater participation in the WSIS Stocktaking process.

Tangible outcomes (such as key achievements, announcements, launches, agreements, commitments, figures, and success stories)

- 3 reports were launched.
- 3 main questions were discussed:
  - How have you engaged in the Stocktaking process and how has that engagement contributed to your progress?

    - Participants sharing personal stories of their nominated project/photo

  - Based on your experience, what makes the WSIS stocktaking process valuable?

    - Stocktaking projects used as lessons to learn from history
    - Sharing insights and valuable knowledge
    - Networking among stakeholders, and helping each other

- WSIS Prizes, Healthy Ageing Innovation Prize, Photo Contest, Digital Service Design Prize as an outcome

- With the new technology emerging like AI, Block chains, how can WSIS Stocktaking Process serve better? / What should we improve to make the Stocktaking process more effective and valuable?

  - Introduce prizes and nominations based on regional areas
  - Call upon re-examination on internal interaction among UN agencies
- Looking beyond ITU and UN to get more stakeholders engaged
- Call upon more support to LDC, LLDC and SIDS

Actionable plan and key recommendations.

- Optimize the WSIS Stocktaking database website interface to provide a better interactive experience, keep encouraging stakeholders to continue submitting projects to the WSIS Stocktaking database
- Continue to expand the reach and impact of the WSIS Stocktaking process, including the WSIS Stocktaking database, WSIS Prizes, Photo Contest, and WSIS Healthy Ageing Innovation Prize.

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

At the WSIS Forum 2025, it is crucial to systematically review the achievements of WSIS 2024, including an annual overview and the collection of success stories. Moreover, at the 20th anniversary of WSIS, it is essential to fully incorporate feedback from various stakeholders and comprehensively summarize the accomplishments of the WSIS Stocktaking Process. This includes reflecting on the contributions of WSIS Stocktaking to the WSIS process over the past two decades and discussing strategies for enhancing the impact of WSIS Stocktaking in the future.

UNGIS

UNGIS High-Level Roundtable Meeting

Tuesday, 28 May 2024, 11:00-12:00

Please find the session details here:

https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/321

UNIGIS Working-Level Meeting

Thursday, 30 May 2024, 11:00-12:00

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/320

WSIS PRIZES 2024

On 6 November 2023, ITU launched the WSIS Prizes 2024 Call, the 13th edition of this major global exercise in recognizing best ICT practices that are implementing the WSIS Action Lines and advancing the Sustainable Development Goals. Call for Submissions is available in all 6 UN languages at the following links: English, عربي, 中文, Español, Français, and Русский.

The United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Resolution E/RES/2023/31 on *Assessment of the progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society* reiterates the importance of sharing best practices at the global level, and, encourages all stakeholders to nominate their projects for the annual WSIS Prizes as an integral part of the WSIS Stocktaking process (www.wsis.org/stocktaking).

Since 2004, the WSIS Stocktaking database, maintained by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), has documented over 10,000 ICT project submissions, promoting initiatives that drive social, cultural, environmental, and economic progress. Since the inception of the WSIS Prizes in 2012, the WSIS Prizes have honoured 234 winners and 576 champions, showcasing a diverse range of initiatives from various sectors and regions.

We are pleased to inform that in 2024, the WSIS Prizes received over 1,000 submissions, culminating in 360 projects nominated for the voting phase. This phase saw an unprecedented participation, with over 2.2 million votes cast globally. From these votes, 90 projects were distinguished as champions, with five champions identified per each category. Following further evaluation, one project from each category's champions was selected as the ultimate winner.

This year's ceremony underscored the transformative impact of ICT initiatives, engaging over 500,000 stakeholders globally and reaching millions through its promotion of winners and champions. It reaffirmed the commitment of the global community to harnessing the power of ICTs for a more inclusive and sustainable world.

Congratulations to all the finalists and winners for their commendable dedication and innovation.

WSIS Prizes 2024 Ceremony

Tuesday, 28 May 2024, 17:00-18:00

https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/442

In 2024, the WSIS Prizes celebrated outstanding ICT initiatives that leveraged technology to address global challenges and promote sustainable development. Over 1,000 submissions were received, leading to 360 nominated projects and an unprecedented 2.2 million votes cast globally during the voting phase. From these, 90 projects were distinguished as champions, with five champions per category, and one project from each category was chosen as the ultimate winner after further evaluation.

The eighteen ultimate winners of the WSIS Prizes 2024 were presented with trophies during a special ceremony at the WSIS Forum+20 Forum High-Level Event. This ceremony was officiated by Mr. Doreen Bogdan-Martin, Secretary-General of the ITU (International Telecommunication Union). It occurred on Tuesday, 28th May from 17:00 to 18:00 at Room D in CICG (Centre International de Conférences Genève). It was attended or represented by seventeen of the eighteen winners, underscoring the ceremony's global significance.

This ceremony is crucial as it not only recognizes excellence in ICT initiatives but also serves as a vital platform for sharing best practices and inspiring further innovation. By highlighting successful projects, the WSIS Prizes encourage collaboration and the adoption of ICTs to drive societal progress and digital inclusion worldwide.

For more information, please see the press release here: Press release (itu.int)

Please find the list of WSIS Prizes winners below:

CATEGORY	PROJECT	ENTITY NAME	COUNTRY
Category 1 — AL C1. The role of governments and all stakeholders in the promotion of ICTs for development.	The National Data Bank (NDB) and Estishraf	Saudi Data & AI Authority	Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Category 2 — AL C2. Information and communication infrastructure	Empowering Disaster Response in Northern Mindanao through the use of Local Radio Networks	Department of Information and Communications Technology - Region 10	Philippines
Category 3 — AL C3. Access to information and knowledge	Tanzania Digital Inclusion Project	Organization for Digital Africa & Internet Society Tanzania Chapter.	United Republic of Tanzania
Category 4 — AL C4. Capacity building	JaWAra Internet Sehat (Cyberwise Champion)	Perkumpulan Mitra TIK Indonesia (ICT Watch)	Republic of Indonesia
Category 5 — AL C5. Building confidence and security in use of ICTs	NationalConnect: Empowering Governance, Education, and Sustainability through Secure Government Video Conferencing"	Bangladesh Computer Council	People's Republic of Bangladesh
Category 6 — AL C6. Enabling environment	Interactive Tool of Policies, Terms and Conditions Applicable in the use of Digital Platforms	Federal Telecommunications Institute	Mexico
Category 7 — AL C7. ICT applications: benefits in all aspects of life — E-government	mygov	Innovation and Digital Development Agency	Republic of Azerbaijan
Category 8 — AL C7. ICT applications: benefits in all aspects of life — E-business	Analytical Portal (Bayanat)	Financial Service Authority (FSA)	Sultanate of Oman
Category 9 — AL C7. ICT applications: benefits in all aspects of life — E-learning	Young ArcHers project.	Universitat Autonoma de Barcelona	Spain

Category 10 — AL C7. ICT applications: benefits in all aspects of life — E-health	Check Me	Check Me Ltd	Republic of Rwanda
Category 11 — AL C7. ICT applications: benefits in all aspects of life — E-employment	Smart Employee	Digital Dubai Authority	United Arab Emirates
Category 12 — AL C7. ICT applications: benefits in all aspects of life — E-environment	AIS E-Waste+ Application	Advanced Info Service Public Company Limited (AIS)	Thailand
Category 13 — AL C7. ICT applications: benefits in all aspects of life — E-agriculture	GeoTanaman	Department of Agriculture	Malaysia
Category 14 — AL C7. ICT applications: benefits in all aspects of life — E-science	Large-Capacity Wide-Area Data Express for Scientific Computing Breakthroughs	China Mobile Communications Group Co., Ltd.	People's Republic of China
Category 15 — AL C8. Cultural diversity and identity, linguistic diversity and local content	Center for Digitization and Documentation of Heritage and Arts Setif	DIGITIZATION ASSOCIATION FOR TECHNOLOGY AND SCIENCE	People's Democratic Republic of Algeria
Category 16 — AL C9. Media	Upview - One-stop AI Solution for content creators to go viral - consistently!	Upview	United States of America
Category 17 — AL C10. Ethical dimensions of the Information Society	Smartpur	Nokia	India
Category 18 — AL C11. International and regional cooperation	University Diploma in Internet Governance and Regulations	South School on Internet Governance	Argentine Republic

Find further details about the winning projects here: Winning Projects — WSIS Prizes 2024 (itu.int).

WSIS Prizes 2024 Champions Ceremony

Thursday, 30 May 2024, 14:00-15:30

https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/478

During the Champions Ceremony, we awarded certificates recognizing the significant achievement of being one of the most voted projects in their category. For further information on the champion projects, please visit WSIS Champions.

During the WSIS Prizes 2024 Champions Ceremony, the Elected Officials of ITU (EOs) presented certificates to the champions:

- Mr. Tomas Lamanauskas, Deputy Secretary-General of the International Telecommunication Union
- Mr. Seizo Onoe, Director of the Telecommunication Standardization Bureau
- Mr. Mario Maniewicz, Director of the Radiocommunication Bureau
- Dr. Cosmas Luckyson Zavazava, Director of the Telecommunication Development Bureau

This recognition event took place at the ITU Headquarters, Montbrillant Building, ICT Discovery on the 2nd floor. The ceremony was attended by a significant number of champions or their representatives. Representing various regions across the globe. This inclusive participation underscored the global significance and impact of the recognized ICT initiatives in advancing sustainable development goals and promoting digital inclusion worldwide.

WSIS SPECIAL PRIZES

WSIS Healthy Ageing Innovation Prize

Thursday, 30 May 2024, 12:00-14:00

Please find the session details here:
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/478

WSIS Digital Service Design Prize 2024

WSIS FORUM PHOTO CONTEST 2024

Thursday, 30 May 2024, 12:00-14:00

https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/478

Ceremony participants: Mr. Tomas Lamanauskas, Deputy Secretary-General

DSG, winners representatives, and finalists are seated at round tables in the room and they will come to the stage to pick up the certificate from DSG while the photo is taken and go back to their seat following the photo.

WSIS Photo Contest 2024 statistics:

- 193 submissions in total; 89 finalists; 10 winners, 3 from Arab States, 2 from Europe, 2 from Asia, and 3 from Africa. 7 finalists are from the Americas.
- Finalists are from Algeria, Nigeria, the Philippines, Senegal, Slovenia, Thailand, Türkiye, the United States of America, Zimbabwe

EXHIBITION INAUGURATION

Monday, 27 May 2024, 11:30-12:00

https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/315

The WSIS+20 Forum High-Level Event 2024, co-hosted with AI for Good, showcased a dynamic and diverse range of more than 35 exhibitors from various sectors including government, civil society, international organizations, private enterprises, the technical community, academia, and youth groups. Despite the new co-hosting arrangement, this year's Exhibition was an exceptional opportunity for global stakeholders to present their pioneering ICT initiatives that promote sustainable development, creating a stimulating and interactive environment that encouraged robust collaboration and partnership building.

The Exhibition featured a wide variety of innovative projects and solutions designed to address key challenges and issues crucial to sustainable development in the information society. Delegates were treated to Virtual Reality films and games, providing an immersive experience that highlighted art, culture, and sports in an engaging and vivid manner. The exhibition area and open spaces also displayed photographic works from the WSIS Forum 2024 photo contest winners, artistically showcasing the significant connection between ICTs and the sustainable development goals of the international community. Also, a digital photo booth was provided from Happy Booth for participants to freely explore digital photo services and leave meaningful memories of the event.

The Exhibition Inauguration took place on 27 May 2024 at 11:30 AM (UTC+02:00), in the open space of the CICG ground floor, honored by Ms. Doreen Bogdan-Martin, Secretary General of ITU, and Mr. Thomas Schneider, Ambassador and Director of International Affairs of the Federal Office of Communication (OFCOM) of Switzerland, as well as H.E. Eng. Majed Sultan Al Mesmar, Director General of the Telecommunications and Digital Government Regulatory Authority (TDRA) of the United Arab Emirates.

The WSIS+20 Forum High-Level Event 2024 exhibition highlighted a significant milestone as WSIS and AI for Good joined forces to host the events simultaneously for the first time during the last two days of the WSIS event. This unique collaboration led to the exhibition being held in two distinct locations - the CICG ground floor and the ITU HQ open space. Exhibitors had the opportunity to engage with attendees in both venues, allowing them to immerse themselves in the vibrant atmosphere of the ITU HQ while showcasing their innovations and technologies. The dual-venue setup added a new dynamic to the event, providing a diverse and enriched experience for all participants.

Exhibited Partners
Platinum Strategic Partner
United Arab Emirates
Gold Plus Strategic Partner
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Partners for Specific Activities
The Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, Incorporated (IEEE)
Contributing Partners
Ernst and Young (EY)
Internet Society (ISOC)
Supporting Partners
Wallonia-Brussels in Geneva, Permanent Mission of Belgium to the UN
International Federation for Information Processing (IFIP)
Digital Health Partner
World Health Organization (WHO)

VR Exhibitors
WorldXR

Regular Exhibitors
The UN Brief
DiploFoundation
Globethics
Shanghai Green Light-Year
Iran University of Science and Technology
The OneGoal Initiative for Governance (OGI)
Ada Lovelace Software Private Limited
China Internet Network Information Center
Consultative Committee on Information Technology of China Association for Science and Technology (CCIT/CAST)
SHG Technologies Pvt. Ltd
Universitat Autonoma de Barcelona
Indonesia

WeGo ⬜ World Smart Sustainable Cities Organization		
Digitech SMME	AddressDox	
	NxaTel for Govt	
	Ambani	
CMAI Association of India		
Kamusi Project International		
ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONALE POUR LE PARTENARIAT ET L EMERGENCE EN AFRIQUE		
ZTE Corporation		

UN Agency Exhibitions
UN International Trade Centre (ITC)
Internet Governance Forum (IGF)
International Monetary Fund (IMF)
UNESCO International Bureau of Education (IBE)
United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR)
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)
UN Environment Programme (UNEP)
International Telecommunication Union (ITU)

All exhibitions at WSIS+20 Forum High-Level Event 2024 were exceptionally insightful, each contributing to the overarching goal of accelerating the achievements of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The range of topics covered by the exhibitions included the following categories:

- Digital Inclusion
- Multistakeholder Initiatives
- Smart Services
- Digital Platforms
- Assistive Technology
- Computer Vision
- Machine Learning
- Full Access to the Internet
- Inclusive AI

Following the conclusion of the WSIS+20 Forum High-Level Event 2024 exhibition, a feedback survey was distributed to exhibitors, yielding a response rate of approximately one-third of all participants. The survey results unveiled a predominantly positive sentiment, indicating satisfaction with various aspects of the event. The responses have provided valuable insights for future planning, confirming that the feedback will be instrumental in enhancing future events to exceed expectations.
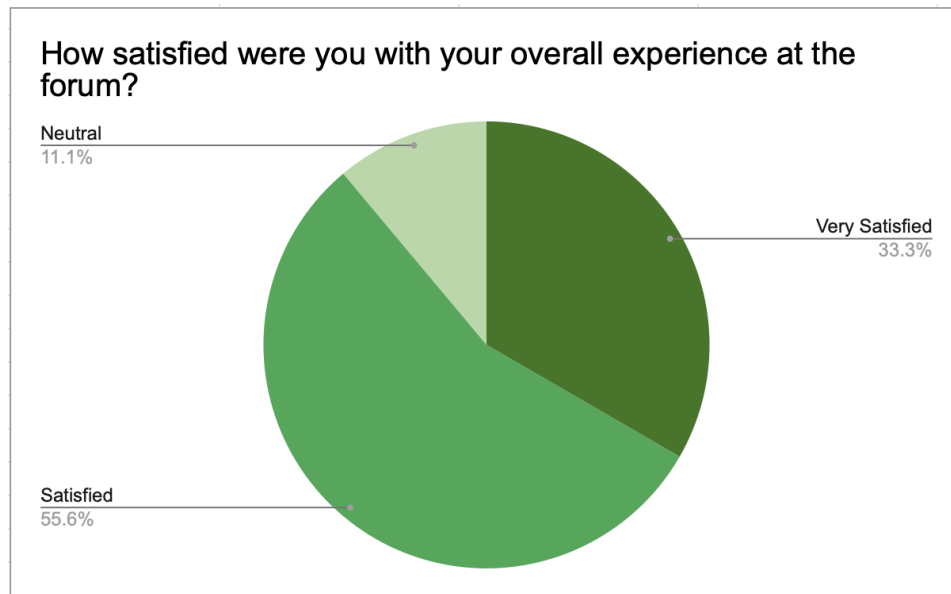
Chart1: How satisfied were you with your overall experience at the forum?
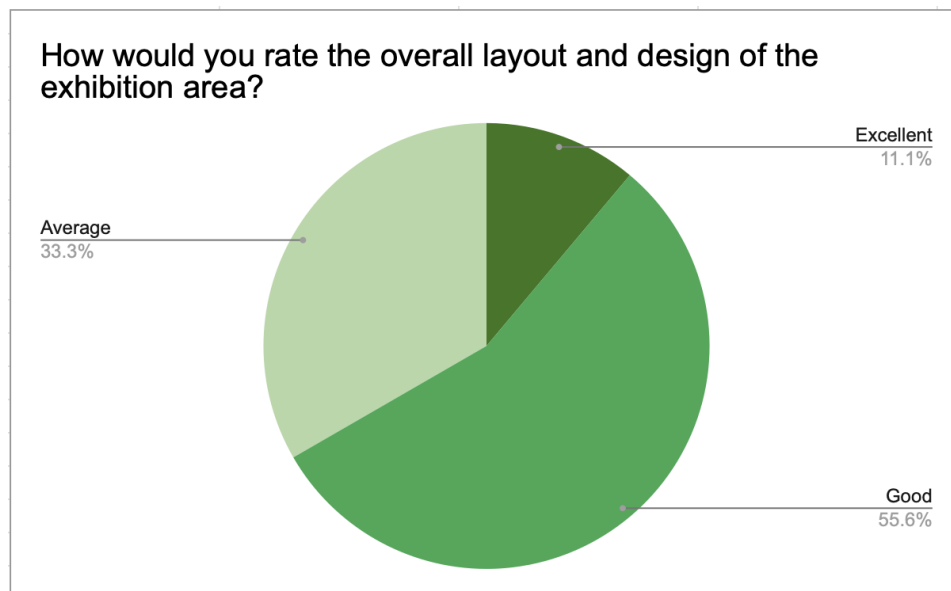
Chart2: How would you rate the overall layout and design of the exhibition area?
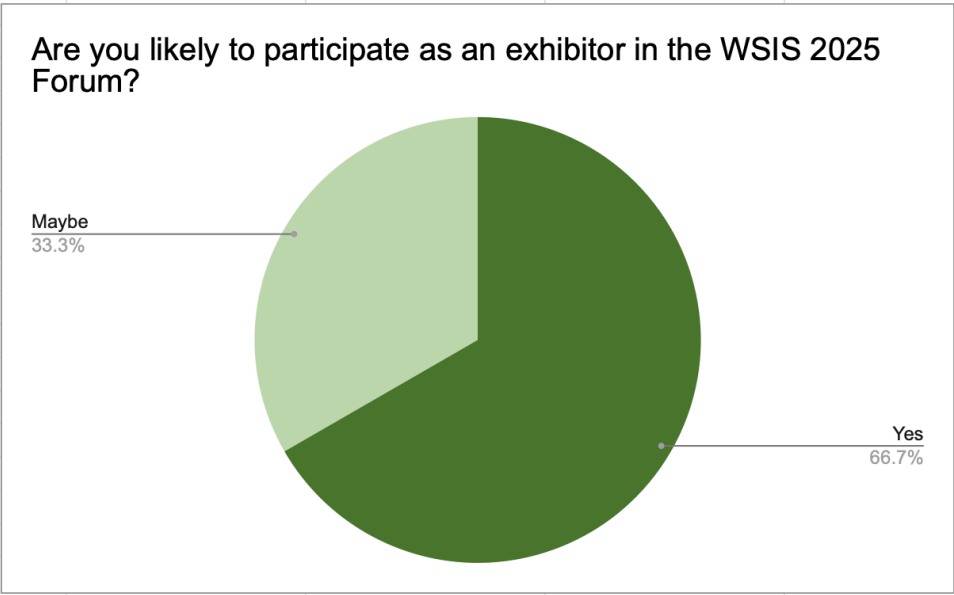
Chart3: Are you likely to participate as an exhibitor in the WSIS 2025 forum?

GENEVA TRIALOGUE 2024

University of Geneva, UNITAR & WSIS

Friday, 31 May 2024, 08:00-18:00
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/482

Key Issues discussed:

During the Trialogue, participants worked together in groups around acceleration-tables to address various challenges relating to this year's theme, Artificial Intelligence and Education for the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. The concept of the Trialogue is in joint work and co-creation of youth and representatives from private sector and international organizations. Participants brainstormed on how AI could foster greater global youth engagement through the Model United Nations (MUN) community. During the day over 90 people participated in the Trialogue. The format included acceleration-tables to address various challenges given by thought leaders. See below the key issues discussed per table:

1. **"Creating a youth-powered global computing resource for sustainable AI"**
   Pioneering a youth-driven initiative, the team aims to enrich international dialogues by simulating discussions through innovative AI technologies. Their prototype facilitates dynamic interactions between digital personas that allows us to anticipate consensus and differences.
2. **"Enhancing Life-long Learning with AI"**
   The team highlighted the necessity to create Human-centered Principles for Lifelong Learning based on maintaining critical thinking, using a representative dataset and integrating existing internationally agreed frameworks into solution. Their proposal was to create an open library platform with applications to improve inclusion of migrants through language acquisition.
3. **"Healing the Post-MUN Syndrome at Scale with AI and Online Learning"**
   Proposing a holistic solution to address the post-MUN syndrome, the team envisions a dynamic platform for aggregating and categorizing model nation proposals from around the globe, fostering continued engagement and recognition among participants. Moreover, they vouch for leadership training initiatives and the establishment of local hubs to serve as sustainability ambassadors.
4. **"Enabling the Use of Open Humanitarian Data for MUNs thanks to AI"**
   Embracing the power of data-driven debates, the team proposes leveraging AI and augmented reality to enhance crisis management simulations within Model United Nations (MUN) contexts, thereby empowering delegates to make informed decisions based on real-time insights.
5. **"Connecting Innovation Hubs in International Organizations with Youth and AI"**
   Advocating for a Hackathon focused on reimagining the future of multilateralism, the team emphasizes the imperative of involving children and students in shaping this discourse. Furthermore, they propose an evaluation framework to assess AI's potential in addressing pressing social challenges, with guidance from ethical and legal experts.
6. **"Using AI to Advance Responsible Philanthropy for Youth-led Innovations"**
   Focusing on user and consumer education, the team highlights the transformative potential of AI in facilitating impactful philanthropy by streamlining donor-project matching processes and automating impact assessments.
7. **"Querying Historical Archives using Chatbots Adapted for MUN Delegates"**

Recognizing the challenges faced by Model United Nations (MUN) delegates in navigating vast archival repositories, the team introduced a sophisticated chatbot prototype tailored to facilitate rapid data retrieval and analysis from the League of Nations archives. This solution, designed to address factual inquiries, also proposes to empower MUN participants while complementing their research capabilities through tailored training programs and the integration of intergenerational knowledge.

8. **"Exploring Youth-based Innovation for Planetary Health Challenges"**
Using the study of floodings in Brazil, the team contemplated leveraging AI to vector tracing for disease monitoring during humanitarian crises triggered by natural disasters. Their innovative approach proposes integration with Citizen Science devices for monitoring efforts.

9. **"Rethinking Children's Rights with Today's World and the Rise of AI"**
Drawing insights from a case study in Grigny, France, the team was seeking to reimagine how cities with educational hubs can foster better integration and education for children. They presented an AI-driven solution aimed at enhancing security, particularly concerning bullying in social networks. Their chatbot prototype, currently in development on Discord, identifies victims and bullies while incorporating a preventative mechanism. Other applications on health consist in an AI system capable of identifying areas within the city lacking adequate medical resources, thereby facilitating targeted resource allocation. For nutrition, they introduce "Western," a tool designed to combat food waste, in school canteens. An AI algorithm correlates food consumption patterns with menu choices to identify and mitigate wastage, ultimately leading to the creation of smarter, more sustainable menus tailored to children's preferences and nutritional needs.

10. **"Making a Cybersecurity Chatbot for Managing Online Youth Events"**
In response to the escalating cybersecurity challenges faced by small and medium enterprises, the team presented a prototype of a chatbot capable of executing comprehensive code scans and identifying targeted solutions. They presented an idea of an affordable solution for SME legal entities and illustrated the work with the use of chatbot prototype.

Additionally, participants discussed the following topics:

- Exploring AI to bridge the gender gap in education and why we need more gender-disaggregated data
- Building an MUN Observatory to study how AI is Transforming the UN.

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

- The Geneva Trialogue in general and particular table topics that were discussed address various WSIS Action Lines, demonstrating both achievements and potential opportunities while navigating the challenges inherent in these endeavors. The focus on AI and youth engagement is particularly promising, as it fosters innovative solutions that can be scaled to meet global sustainable development goals.
- The emphasis on creating a youth-powered global computing resource and engaging youth in innovation hubs reflects a trend towards empowering young people to lead technological advancements. This aligns with the WSIS Action Lines on capacity building and enabling environments.
- Initiatives focused on leadership training, digital literacy, and AI education for youth can build a skilled workforce ready to tackle future challenges. Investing in capacity-building programs aligns with the WSIS Action Lines on education and capacity building.
- Other Als: **C1** - Connecting Innovation Hubs in International Organizations with Youth and AI: Promotes the involvement of public and private sectors and civil society in ICT development,

Leveraging the hackathon format to drive innovative solutions with broad stakeholder involvement. **C3** - Querying Historical Archives using Chatbots Adapted for MUN Delegates: Enhancing access to historical data through AI-driven chatbots. Expanding this idea to other archives and databases to democratize access to information. **C6** - Using AI to Advance Responsible Philanthropy for Youth-led Innovations: Creating an enabling environment for impactful philanthropy, automating impact assessments and streamlining donor-project matching processes.

Tangible outcomes (such as key achievements, announcements, launches, agreements, commitments, figures, and success stories)

During the Trialogue, the SDG Summer Schools were presented, and the SDG Olympiad was announced. During intensive programs held in June and July, called SDG Summer Schools, students from 10 universities around the world learn to use open-source tools, Citizen Science methodologies, and AI solutions to generate data for tracking progress in their communities towards the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals. The projects of each school will compete and the ones with more potential will be presented SDG Olympiad. The SDG Olympiad, an award ceremony held in Paris this September, will celebrate the efforts shown in this annual competition for youth enabling youth-driven social and environmental impact.

Actionable plan and key recommendations

- All participants are encouraged to sustain their collaborative efforts by utilizing the SDG Solution Space LinkedIn Platform as a central hub for ongoing engagement and communication. This platform will serve as a dynamic space for sharing insights, updates, and progress towards our collective goals.
- Furthermore, there is anticipation for a potential second event to be organized in the latter half of this year, offering another valuable opportunity for networking, knowledge exchange, and advancing initiatives aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Key recommendations:

- Implementation of large language model (LLM) - LLM-powered solutions provides personalized learning experiences and supports research tailored for high level discussions.
- LLMs can also facilitate cross-cultural understanding by analyzing personal patterns, differences and commonalities from diverse backgrounds.
- LLMs possess the ability to provide expert-level responses, helping democratize information access by empowering communities, particularly those in remote or underserved areas, to obtain answers to critical questions.
- LLMs can help respond to natural disasters, conflicts and other crises, by querying databases formed from previous cases.

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

The integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) within the practices of the United Nations and other international organizations and processes presents a profound opportunity to systematically revamp the organization from the ground up, fostering a more inclusive and dynamic framework. By placing an emphasis on youth-driven initiatives, the United Nations is better equipped to address the complex challenges of the 21st century. The thematic aspects suggested for the WSIS Forum 2025 focus on harnessing AI for sustainable development, enhancing education and lifelong learning, empowering youth, ensuring ethical and inclusive AI practices, strengthening

data and cybersecurity, fostering public governance and cooperation. These themes align with the current trends and challenges identified during the Geneva Trialogue, providing a comprehensive framework for future discussions and initiatives at the WSIS Forum.

CLOSING CEREMONY

Friday, 31 May 2024, 15:00-16:00
https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/325

The Closing Ceremony of the WSIS+20 Forum High-Level Event took place on Friday, 31 May 2024, at 15:00, in the Popov Room at ITU HQ, marking the conclusion of the impactful five-day program.

The Secretary-General of ITU, Doreen Bogdan-Martin, delivered the opening remarks, expressing gratitude to the WSIS community for their continuous support and commitment. Following this, the Chair of the WSIS+20 Forum High-Level Event, represented by Mr. Thomas Schneider, Ambassador and Director of International Affairs at the Office Fédéral de la Communication (OFCOM), presented the Chair's Summary of the session.

During the closing ceremony, representatives from co-organisers UNDP, UNESCO, and UNCTAD also delivered their remarks. The floor was then opened for participants to share their experiences and thoughts from the WSIS+20 Forum High-Level Event. Attendees collectively expressed their appreciation for the WSIS Process and their gratitude for the strengthened relationships among various WSIS stakeholders. They emphasized the unique opportunity for information exchange and the sharing of best practices. Among the recommendations from the audience was the suggestion to include more young people in future forums to ensure diverse and innovative perspectives.

WSIS+20 FORUM HIGH-LEVEL EVENT 2024 PARTNERS

WSIS is extrabudgetary supported through voluntary contributions from partners. By contributing through the WSIS Fund in Trust and becoming Digital Transformation Partners for the WSIS Forum, partners can increase their visibility, enhance their brand reputation, and network with key stakeholders in the ICT sector. Partnership packages offer a range of benefits, including speaking opportunities, exhibition spaces, and promotional activities, tailored to meet the diverse needs and objectives of our partners.

For more details on the WSIS+20 Forum High-Level Event Partnership Packages for Digital Transformation Partners, please visit: https://www.itu.int/en/itu-wsis/Documents/Fund2024/WSISFundInTrust2024-Packages-en.pdf

The ITU WSIS Team extends heartfelt thanks to all partners for their invaluable contributions, which are instrumental in strengthening all activities related to the WSIS+20 Forum High-Level Event 2024. This collective effort underscores the significance of collaborative engagement in advancing the goals and initiatives of the WSIS process. By joining as a partner, organizations play a pivotal role in shaping the future of the global information and knowledge societies.

SOCIAL EVENTS

EVENT	DATE & TIME
Reception by Poland	Sunday 26 May, 2024 19:00 – 21:00
High-Level Lunch (Sponsored by United Arab Emirates, Platinum Partner)	Monday 27 May, 2024 12:00 – 14:00
Official Reception, including partners certificates (Sponsored by ITU and Switzerland)	Monday 27 May, 2024 18:30 – 21:00
High Level Lunch (Sponsored by Saudi Arabia, Gold Plus Partner)	Tuesday 28 May, 2024 12:00 – 13:00
Coffee Break (Sponsored by Japan, Partner for specific activities)	Tuesday 28 May, 2024 15:30 – 15:45
Gala Dinner (Sponsored by ITU and UAE, Platinum Partner)	Tuesday 28 May, 2024 18:30 – 22:00
Yoga: Wellbeing and mindfulness session with professional instructors (Sponsored by the Permanent Mission of India)	Monday 27 May, 2024 18:00 – 18:30 Tuesday 28 May, 2024 18:00 – 18:30 Thursday 30 May, 2024 18:00 – 18:30 Friday 31 May, 2024 8:30 – 9:00

DOCUMENTATION

Recordings:

https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/RPWeb

Video Highlights and Interviews:

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLh5wUIxznUUVZwVrHI0WG64TeRZKyDrsT

Photographs:

https://www.flickr.com/photos/itupictures/collections/72157722805064233/

PRESS COVERAGE

Snapshot

- **A series of press products were produced to support media coverage of the WSIS+20 Forum High-Level Event, including 3 press releases.** The media team also distributed ITU SG remarks and event planning notes. Media outreach and engagement included the participation of Ms. Gitanjali Sah with the UNOG regular press briefing, with approximately 40 journalists attending. David Hirsch joined a press briefing on WSIS conducted by the Swiss Mission and attended by about 12 journalists.

- WSIS+20 achieved extensive local media coverage, with many national and regional outlets reporting on their country's participation in the event. T**he WSIS Prizes, the subject of an ITU press release, generated the majority of mentions.** Agence France-Presse (AFP), one of the top global newswires, filed twice on P2C pledges made at the WSIS Forum event, which was also subject of an ITU press release.

- In terms of participation, **9 journalists received media accreditation specific to the event.** This is in addition to those granted access to WSIS through their accreditation for the AI for Good Global Summit. The vast majority of accredited reporters were Swiss journalists working for the press agencies Keystone, SwissInfo, and Geneva Solutions.

- **In addition, 4 inquiries related to WSIS+20 were managed by the ITU Press Service and one interview was organized with the Head of CCD in the ITU studio:**
  - Radio Cité Genève (Interview in French with Monika Gehner)
  - Global Media (Coverage inquiry and video request on KSA speech)
  - TR Daily (Inquiry on P2C pledges announced at WSIS+20)
  - Good Company Pictures (Shooting request for a documentary)

- **Between 25 May and 4 June, over 600 written mentions were monitored, with a potential reach including syndication/aggregation of +750 million views.** Sentiment was positive (96%) to neutral (4%). Stories filed by key national news agencies prompted much of the local media coverage. Key reach was achieved on 29 May, just after the press release on the WSIS Prizes. (NOTE: Potential audience reach based on reported circulation and viewership numbers provided through Cision.)
  - Outlets carrying most of the coverage about the event were based in: US, India, Australia, Indonesia, Switzerland, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia, UAE and China.
  - Most viewed stories were filed by AFP and The Economic Times (India).

WSIS+20 top mentions - 25 May / 4 June 2024

Key infographics

Share of Sentiment
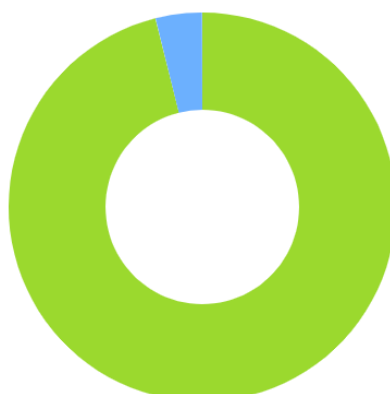
Positive: 96.1%   Neutral: 3.9%

Reach

Mobile UVPM (547.8M)   Desktop UVPM (205.8M)   Reach (247.7K)
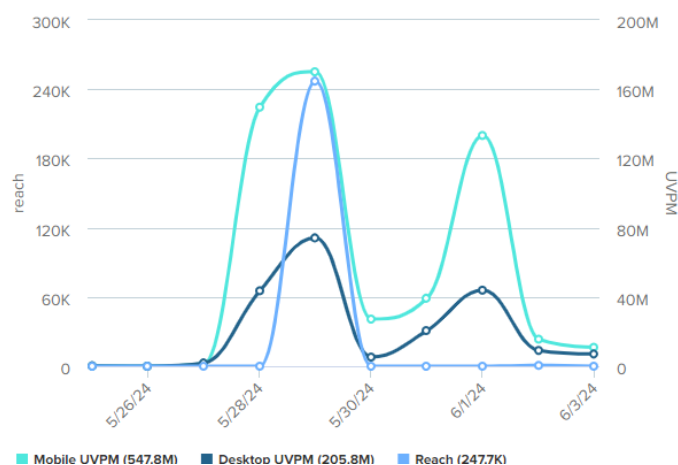
Prominent Terms

Key mentions

SWI swissinfo.ch

Rösti calls for efforts to connect the whole world to the Internet

27 May 2024 – Keystone via SwissInfo [machine-translated]

(Keystone-ATS) The world must continue to work towards connecting everyone to the Internet, according to Federal Councillor Albert Rösti. "This is not the end of our collaborative work, but still the beginning," he said at the start of a meeting in Geneva on Monday.

"We have achieved many goals, but not all", said the Federal Councillor, more than 20 years after the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) was held in the city of Calvin. "Too many people still don't have access to electricity", which is essential for being connected, insisted the man chairing this "WSIS+20" meeting.

"The time has come" to enable more than 2.5 billion people to have access to the Internet, insisted Doreen Bogdan Martin, Secretary General of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU). She praised Switzerland's pioneering role in international efforts for an "equitable" digital world.

In recent years, the challenges posed by artificial intelligence (AI) - which will be the subject of another discussion this week in Geneva, with the presence of robots once again - have made discussions around these new technologies even more difficult. In the face of "uncertainties", the international community can rely on "solid" approaches, said Ms. Bogdan Martin. She added that the WSIS was sufficiently "flexible" to deal with new technologies.

Governance of new technologies

Throughout the week, thousands of delegates from governments, the private sector and civil society are meeting to discuss the governance of new technologies. Switzerland plans to publish a Presidency paper, an informal format that will feed into the forthcoming discussions on this issue in New York.

The member states are stalling negotiations on a Global Digital Compact, due to be signed in September at the Summit of the Future in New York, so divided are they by the political tensions between the major powers. Mr. Rösti called for the implementation of the guidelines recently approved at an international conference by numerous players.

In a little over a year's time, the UN General Assembly will also have to decide whether or not to approve the continuation of the WSIS and the Internet Governance Forum (IGF). "This approach works" and must be "protected", said the ITU head.

Switzerland, for its part, defends the possibility of continuing these mechanisms, which enable all players to be involved in a broad, informal approach.

AFP

27 May 2024 – Agence France-Presse (AFP) via 20 Minutes [machine-translated]

Illectronism. The term illustrates a situation that will affect 15% of the world's population in 2021, according to a study published on June 22, 2023 by the French National Institute for Statistics and Economic Studies (INSEE). A not insignificant fringe which, according to the definition of the word, concerns people with restricted or non-existent access to the Internet, or lacking the skills to use it to meet their needs.

To reduce this digital divide, the United Nations (UN) has announced a significant step forward in its efforts by securing new pledges of $4.8 billion (€4.4 billion). This brings the total funds raised by the UN since 2021 to over $50 billion. This amount now represents half of the $100 billion target set by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) for 2026.

A challenge for economic growth and health

ITU Secretary-General Doreen Bogdan-Martin hailed the breakthrough as a "huge victory for global connectivity". Based in Geneva, the ITU launched the Partner2Connect (P2C) coalition in 2021 to establish public-private partnerships aimed at connecting the hardest-to-reach populations.

"These commitments will enable millions of people to have access to more accessible and affordable digital technologies, promoting socio-economic growth, improved health and other key aspects of connectivity," she commented. According to the ITU, some 2.6 billion people worldwide were still without Internet in 2023.

Future North American donors

At the World Summit on the Information Society, taking place in Geneva from May 27 to 31, some notable commitments were announced by the UN body. American telecoms giant AT & T has pledged

$3 billion, a billion-dollar increase on its previous commitments. The American company intends to help 25 million people in the USA in the most difficult-to-connect regions.

For its part, the Canadian government has made a $1.7 billion pledge to support artificial intelligence (AI) companies and researchers in Canada and create a new institute for AI safety. Publishing house Elle International has pledged $106 million to improve the quality of life for 20 million women in South Africa through digital platforms, smart solutions, data and AI models.

Finally, Microsoft reaffirmed its commitment to support projects and prioritize partnerships to rapidly accelerate the way people with disabilities are included and represented in systems, designs and features of technology.5 million people in the United States in the hardest to connect regions.

G GENEVA SOLUTIONS
WHAT HAPPENS — WHAT WORKS

Countries grapple with shaping AI governance amid heightened global tensions

27 May 2024 – Geneva Solutions

After twenty years of unsuccessful attempts at governing the internet, similar discussions over artificial intelligence are gathering pace. While the challenges may be new, old divisions are resurfacing.

As AI develops at a fast pace and seeps into more aspects of our daily lives, conversations about whether to regulate it and how to do so are heating up. In less than four months, UN member states are set to adopt a political declaration meant to lay the tracks for the future of global governance of digital technologies and artificial intelligence. This week in Geneva, it will be the burning question at the World Society Information Summit (WSIS) Forum.

But amid geopolitical tensions at historical levels and leading powers butting heads as they engage in an AI arms race, the prospects of any major political convergence are meagre. For observers who have become accustomed to the complex and entangled web that is digital governance, it may not be such a bad thing.

20 years of talking

This year marks 20 years of the first landmark conference which bequeathed the forum its name – WSIS. In 2003, governments came together to try to decide how the world should govern its latest revolutionary innovation that would later upend all aspects of society – the internet. Divergences between those who thought companies should be left to run free and those who thought the UN should come up with some global rules to level the playing field could only be resolved by compromise. Enter the WSIS forum and the Internet Governance Forum, a "carefully crafted compromise" which, for the last two decades, has served as a place for dialogue and exchange of ideas in the absence of hard rules.

Swiss ambassador Thomas Schneider, vice director of the Swiss Federal Office for Communication who is chairing the forum, highlights the meetings' value as "a context that allows reaching consensus on the issues to be solved and work with different actors, including the private sector and civil society, and find solutions together in a non-confrontational manner."

"A lot of regulation on systems using AI was pre-discussed in an Internet Governance Forum or a WISIS forum; then these things are picked up by other institutional actors like the OECD or the Council of Europe; those can, in turn, develop policy instruments such as for instance, the Convention on AI," he told Geneva Solutions.

No big decisions or announcements should be expected at the end of this week from the WSIS forum. But to the discerning eye, plenty can be revealed. "This is the last major gathering before the Summit of the Future, and therefore countries will make their positions known, signal what they want and what the red lines are," Jovan Kurbalija, executive director of DiploFoundation, told Geneva Solutions.

Geopolitical tensions

After mulling over how to regulate the digital realm for two decades, the world finds itself at the cusp of yet another technological revolution with the advent of AI. Between heightened US-China tensions, the west at a standoff with Russia and conflict in the Middle East deepening fractures in the multilateral system, the climate for global agreements is less than favourable.

A recent first meeting between US and Chinese officials in Geneva on the security risks of AI could have led some to believe in a thawing of tensions at least on the tech issue. But Kurbalija tempers expectations. While the two rivals have shown a willingness to talk to one other over AI, other fields of technology remain "the scene of geopolitical battles", as seen with the latest tit-for-tat bans relating to US microprocessors.

"More countries are losing hope in multilateral cooperation and preferring digital sovereignty to protect their digital space from the spillover from global geopolitics," the former diplomat said.

Developing countries fear that AI risks widening the gap with wealthy nations. The concerns were palpable at a conference on AI and development organised by the Central African Republic and the International Organisation of la Francophonie (OIF) last week, where Tunisian ambassador Sabri Bachtobji compared it to the Covid pandemic – countries were all asked to share data about the spread of the virus in their territories, but when vaccines were developed, they were left on their own.

The comments come as developing countries demand for equity at fraught negotiations for a pandemic treaty set to conclude at the World Health Assembly this week.

Can New York provide guidance?

As the layers of challenges add up, the Global Digital Compact set to be adopted in New York in September is being touted by some as the much-needed guiding star. However, observers are wary of vague proposals for new bodies and new funds included in the draft.

"The biggest concern is how to avoid duplications because there are bodies which are already discussing digital issues," said Kurbalija, cautioning against undermining Geneva's already well-established ecosystem of technical institutions, including the International Union of Telecommunications and the World Meteorological Organization but also its orbiting satellites such as WSIS, the GIF and the Human Rights Council.

"We often discuss in abstract what should be digital or AI governance. In the lines of the famous architecture Bauhaus principle, form should follow the function. What do we really want to regulate with AI? Long-term risks? Short-term risks? Education? There is no clarity yet, but I hope that the compact can provide that in the discussion around governance," he added.

Mehdi Snene, senior advisor of the UN's tech envoy, argued at the AI and development meeting that governance discussions should focus on the outputs rather than the technology itself, for example anticipating intellectual property rights implications of AI-produced content.

One of the proposals in the text is to create an IPCC-style scientific panel for AI and emerging technologies that could help governments understand the potential and risks of the technology and perhaps even provide policy guidance – a "reasonable compromise", according to Kurbalija. He is sceptical that countries would agree on creating a new regulating body.

"Small and developing countries are tired of this proliferation of bodies and the politicisation. They're looking for practical solutions," he said.

Funding is another issue where disagreement is likely to continue. The current draft proposes the establishment of a $100 million Global Fund for AI and emerging technologies for Sustainable Development in 2025 built on voluntary donations from public, private and philanthropic sources. Speaking at the conference on AI and development, OIF representative Henri Monceu pleaded in favour of such a fund as a critical piece to make sure developing countries also reap the benefits of AI.

"There is a need to support the development of digitalisation and AI in developing countries, but I'm not sure that it will fly," said Kurbalija. He points to a proposal at the last WSIS meeting in Tunis in 2005 to create a digital solidarity fund, ultimately rejected by developed countries such as the United States and the United Kingdom. Developed countries are often the ones expected to foot the bill for such funds.

But even if the prospects for major political decisions look slim, Kurbalija notes it shouldn't be a reason to bring everything to a halt. "While everybody's busy discussing what should be the framework for the future of AI governance, Geneva organisations should start contributing to digital AI governance through their activities", which he noted some organisations are already embracing.

PRENSA LATINA

Information Society Summit opens its doors in Geneva

27 May 2024 – Prensa Latina [machine-translated]

In an official statement, the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) said that the global event, scheduled to run until the 31st, will serve as a platform for discussions and take stock of achievements and key trends, challenges and opportunities since the Plan of Action that was set out some two decades ago in two phases: Geneva 2003 and Tunis 2005.

"Twenty years ago, WSIS established the framework for global digital cooperation with the vision of building people-centered, inclusive and development-oriented information and knowledge societies," the report notes.

As part of the event's activities, the AI for Good Summit will be held on May 30 and 31, where world leaders and innovators in artificial intelligence (AI) will come together to study how this novel technology can drive sustainable development.

This will showcase innovations in generative AI, robotics and brain-machine interfaces that can accelerate progress in multiple areas, including climate action, accessibility, health and disaster response.

"ITU's annual AI for Good Global Summit provides a meeting point for multiple experts with different views to examine the latest developments in AI and establish how this technology can be ensured to continue to be a force for good, promoting inclusive growth and sustainable and equitable progress for all," said ITU Secretary-General Bogdan-Martin.
AI for Good identifies practical applications of AI to facilitate the achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals and foster collaboration of innovators in the field of AI.

Each year, ITU, the UN agency specializing in information and communication technologies, organizes the AI for Good Global Summit in collaboration with 40 UN partner agencies and the Government of Switzerland.

In addition to presentations by a number of intellectual leaders in AI, there will be master classes on machine learning, brain-machine interfaces, AI for public services and machine learning in communications networks.

The AI for Good World Summit exhibition space will feature collective drone swarms, bio-inspired rescue robots, a robotic soccer tournament, performance-enhancing exoskeletons and AI-inspired art.

Leaders

Saudi Arabia Participates at WSIS+20 Forum

28 May 2024 – Leaders

World Summit on the Information Society Forum "WSIS +20",

The Governor of the Communications, Space and Technology Commission, Dr. Mohammed bin Saud Al-Tamimi, headed the Kingdom's delegation at the opening of the World Summit on the Information Society Forum "WSIS +20", held in Geneva, Switzerland.

Ambassador Abdul Mohsen bin Majed, the Kingdom's Permanent Representative to the UN in Geneva, reiterated Saudi Arabia's commitment to enhancing cooperation and building bridges to implement the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society.

The ambassador emphasized the Kingdom's commitment to sustainability, aiding in accomplishing 96% of the ITU Connect 2030 goals in 2022. Moreover, this step was achieved through initiatives fostering innovation, bridging the digital gap, and enhancing cooperation among ITU members and stakeholders.

He wrapped up by saying that the Kingdom aims to open new horizons with space tech to foster humanity's growth and sustainability. The inaugural space debris conference was held in collaboration with the ITU and UNOOSA.

The World Summit on the Information Society Forum "WSIS +20" is an annual event by the International Telecommunication Union. Furthermore, it enhances cooperation, and celebrates 20 years of global efforts in technology for sustainable development and bridging the digital divide.

UN hails $4.8 bn in new pledges to boost global connectivity

28 May 2024 – Agence France-Presse via The Economic Times

Geneva: The United Nations said Monday that it had raked in $4.8 billion in new pledges towards closing the global digital divide, bringing total pledges to over $50 billion.

Around 2.6 billion people, or one-third of the global population, remained offline in 2023, according to data from the International Telecommunications Union, the UN's telecoms agency.

"Closing the digital divide requires a team effort, and today we scored a huge win for global connectivity," ITU chief Doreen Bogdan-Martin said in a statement.

The ITU has been leading efforts to rectify a situation where a third of the world's population has never connected to the internet, and is being left out of the advantages that digitalisation can provides.

In 2021, the Geneva-based UN agency launched the Partner2Connect Digital Coalition, with the aim of using public-private partnerships to help increase digitalisation in the world's hardest-to-connect communities.

It has set a target of raising $100 billion by 2026, and ITU hailed Monday that it was now more than halfway to that goal, with a total of $50.96 billion in pledges so far.

The new pledges were announced on the first day of this year's World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), being hosted by the ITU in Geneva this week.

Among the new commitments was a $3-billion-pledge from US telecom giant AT&T. The company, which had previously pledged $2 billion to the project, vowed to help 25 million people in the hardest-to-connect areas of the United States to get and stay connected by 2030.

The Canadian government meanwhile pledged $1.46 billion towards investment in computing infrastructure to support artificial intelligence (AI) businesses and researchers in the country. Canada also committed to spend an additional $292 million to among other things help facilitate the adoption of AI across the country's economy, and to create a new Canadian AI Safe Institute to examine and protect against the risks of advanced AI systems.

And Elle International made three pledges worth a total of $106 million to help improve the quality of life of 20 million women and girls in South Africa through the provision of digital platforms, smart solutions, data and AI models.

"Because of the leadership, vision and ambition of P2C's pledgers, millions of people will be given the opportunity to have more accessible, more affordable digital technologies for socioeconomic growth, improved health and everything that makes connectivity meaningful," Bogdan-Martin said.

IFT receives the "WSIS PRIZES 2024" award during the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) 2024

28 May 2024 – Jentel [machine-translated]

The Federal Telecommunications Institute (IFT) received the World Summit on the Information Society 2024 (WSIS Prizes 2024) Action Line C6 Enabling Environment Award for the "Interactive Policy Tool, Terms and Conditions Applicable in the Use of Digital Platforms", granted by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU).

ITU Secretary General Doreen Bogdan-Martin presented the award to IFT's acting President Commissioner Javier Juárez Mojica and Commissioner Arturo Robles Rovalo, during the High Level Event of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS)+20 2024 Forum, which is being held from May 27 to 31, 2024, in Geneva, Switzerland.

In this 13th edition of the WSIS Prizes, IFT's "Interactive Tool for Policies, Terms and Conditions Applicable in the Use of Digital Platforms" was one of the projects with the highest number of votes in its category.
The Tool allows users to know and compare the information that the main digital platforms collect, as well as the treatment they give to it and the options they have within the platforms to remove or manage them.

The main objective of this Tool is to provide users with transparent and accessible information about the treatment given to their information, as well as the permissions or licenses granted to the various digital platforms when they use them.

The World Summit on the Information Society was established with the vision of building people-centered, inclusive and development-oriented information and knowledge societies. This year's high-level event is co-organized by ITU, UNESCO, UNDP and UNCTAD and co-hosted by ITU and the Swiss Confederation.

The WSIS Awards are one of the most important global recognitions in the field of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), highlighting initiatives and projects that have a significant impact on the information society and contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The Award validates the efforts made by the IFT to implement projects that make information transparent, facilitate access and interaction of users with telecommunications services in an informed manner so that they can maximize the benefits provided by these services.

At WSIS 2024 Forum, Minister of Communication and Information Outlines Indonesia's Digital Development Goals

28 May 2024 – Emiten News [machine-translated]

Minister of Communication and Informatics Budi Arie Setiadi explained Indonesia's digital development goals during the Ministerial Roundtable at the WSIS+20 Forum 2024, held by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) in Geneva, Switzerland.

"Digital development in Indonesia is directed at realizing inclusive, empowering, and sustainable connectivity to achieve the 2045 Golden Indonesia Vision," said Minister of Communication and Information Budi Arie Setiadi in his statement regarding his working visit to attend the WSIS Forum 2024 from Geneva, Switzerland, on Wednesday (29/5/2024).

The Ministerial Roundtable led by ITU Secretary-General Doreen Bogdan-Martin was attended by leaders of international organizations and around 35 Ministers of Telecommunications or Digital from various countries in the world.

The meeting at the Geneva International Conference Center (CICG) discussed a number of issues, such as artificial intelligence (AI) technology and the development of digital technology. Ministers at the meeting were of the view that the world needs to pay special attention to the interests of the Global South with regard to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and equitable development for all.

Participating countries also discussed efforts to anticipate various emerging issues. Among others, artificial intelligence, cross-border data flows, talent development and digital literacy, handling disinformation, equitable connectivity, cybersecurity, and several other priority issues.
"Indonesia's various digital transformation initiatives have been recognized as a global reference, which is shown by the awards that Indonesia has continued to receive at the ITU WSIS forum in recent years," he said.

The Ministerial Roundtable agreed on digital development that is inclusive, human-centered, and development-oriented.

ประชาชาติธุรกิจ
WWW.PRACHACHAT.NET ออนไลน์

AIS stands number one on the world stage. AIS E-Waste+ app wins award for best technology for the environment.

28 May 2024 – Prachachat [machine-translated]

AIS stands number one on the world stage.

The AIS E-Waste+ app wins the award for best technology for the environment from the WSIS Prize 2024 by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and the United Nations (UN).

AIS reinforces sustainable business operations that aims to create shared growth in 3 areas, including driving digital for the economy Create digital access for everyone in society and in the environment In addition to managing energy use efficiently by using renewable energy. And technology has come in to help manage the network to suit customer use in order to reduce the amount of greenhouse gas emissions.

Today, AIS is also raising awareness of the importance of separating electronic waste or E-Waste through the "Thai people without E-Waste" project, working with more than 200 partner organizations to become an electronic waste disposal center or Hub. of E-Waste In addition, AIS has gone one step further by introducing blockchain technology (blockchain) to enhance the e-waste management process on the AIS E-Waste+ platform, making every piece of E-Waste that is discarded through AIS E-Waste+ able to be inspected. Check the status of the entire process from origin to landfill-free disposal and recycling or Zero E-Waste to Landfill.

Saŭḍi Ġazettĕ

Saudi Arabia garners accolades at WSIS+20

29 May 2024 – Saudi Gazette

At the recent World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS+20) organized by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) in Geneva, Saudi Arabia stood out by winning several prestigious awards, showcasing its advancements in information and communication technologies (ICT).

The Saudi Data & AI Authority (SDAIA) won the award in the "role of governments and all stakeholders in the promotion of ICTs for Development" category for its National Data Bank (NDB) and Estishraf project. These initiatives aim to enhance the quality of data within the Kingdom, promote international cooperation, and contribute to a data-driven digital economy through specialized platforms.

Additionally, Saudi Arabia received three excellence certificates. The "AI Principals Project" by SDAIA was recognized for its focus on ethical AI development and implementation across its lifecycle. The "Elevate" project, also by SDAIA, was celebrated for its efforts in empowering women and providing training in data and AI to over 1,000 women from 28 countries since its inception.

Furthermore, the "SmartTruck" project by the Saudi Telecom Company (STC) in partnership with HUAWEI, aimed at bridging the digital divide for seniors through digital skills training programs, was also acknowledged.

These accolades reflect the Kingdom's significant strides in enhancing its ICT infrastructure, fostering national capabilities, and aligning with global advancements in sectors like government services, healthcare, education, and entertainment.

Algeria winner of the WSIS 2024 prize

29 May 2024 – Radio Algérienne [machine-translated]

Algeria was awarded the prize for the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) 2024, the forum of which is being held from May 27 to 31 in Geneva, in the presence of the Minister of Post and Telecommunications, Karim Bibi Triki.

Algeria was distinguished during the WSIS awards ceremony which was held on Tuesday during the forum.

In this context, the Digital Center for Documentation of Heritage and Arts of Sétif (Digital Society of Technology and Science of the wilaya of Sétif) was awarded an award in the person of young Nassim Louchali, ranked first in the "Diversity and identity" category. cultural, linguistic diversity and local content. He was honored by the Secretary General of the International Telecommunications Union (ITU), Doreen Bogdan-Martin, in the presence of Mr. Bibi Triki.

Three other Algerian projects also reached the final of this competition. These are the projects of the National Operating Agency, the National Electricity and Gas Company (Sonelgaz) and a research team.

The Algerian projects selected for the competition for the World Summit on the Information Society 2024, organized each year by the ITU, have obtained very satisfactory results on a global scale.

The WSIS Awards competition was developed in response to requests from WSIS stakeholders to create an effective mechanism to evaluate projects and activities that harness the power of information and communication technologies (ICT) to make advance sustainable development.

Since its creation, the WSIS Prize competition has attracted more than 300,000 candidates.
The WSIS Prizes are the unique global platform to identify and showcase successes in implementing the WSIS Action Lines and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

[Budi Arie appreciates JaWara Internet Sehat's win at WSIS Prizes](#)

29 May 2024 – Antara Sumbar [machine-translated]

Minister of Communication and Information Budi Arie Setiadi congratulated and expressed his appreciation for JaWAra Internet Sehat's victory at the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) Prizes 2024 held in Geneva, Switzerland, Tuesday (28/5).

JaWAra Internet Sehat was named the Winner in the C4 - Capacity Building category in the WSIS+20 Forum High Level Event agenda at the WSIS Prizes 2024.

"I highly appreciate the initiative of ICT Watch through the JaWAra Internet Sehat program. This program has contributed significantly in supporting the improvement of digital literacy in Indonesia," he said in a press release on Wednesday.

Budi Arie, who witnessed the WSIS Prizes award presentation, hoped that this initiative from Indonesia can inspire the world, and can continue to have a positive impact on society.
JaWAra Internet Sehat is a digital literacy program initiated by ICT Watch together with WhatsApp Indonesia with the support of the Ministry of Communication and Information, UNICEF Indonesia, Siberkreasi National Digital Literacy Movement (GNLD) and ICT Volunteers.

By involving 160 young people from all over Indonesia, JaWAra Internet Sehat encourages the digital literacy movement with a local wisdom approach, so that it can be more easily accepted by the community.

The award was presented directly by the Secretary General of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), Doreen Bogdan-Martin, to the Executive Director of ICT Watch, Indriyatno Banyumurti, as the initiator of JaWAra Internet Sehat.

The award presentation also received full support from the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Indonesia in Geneva.

There are 18 categories of programs and initiatives competed in the WSIS Prizes and each has 1 Winner (main winner) and 4 Champions.

The winners must go through an initial verification mechanism, online selection and final assessment by a jury of experts appointed by ITU - UN.

This achievement once again marked Indonesia's brilliant achievement in the WSIS Prizes event.

As a Winner, JaWAra Internet Sehat has proven to have done its best work and performance in the eyes of the expert jury, outperforming 360 other program initiatives that were nominated in the WSIS Prizes 2024 event.

The Minister of Communication in charge of Posts and Telecommunications in Geneva for the World Forum on the Information Society 2024

29 May 2024 – Agence Djiboutienne d'Information [machine-translated]

The Minister of Communication in charge of Posts and Telecommunications, Mr. Radwan Abdillahi Bahdon, is currently participating in the World Forum on the Information Society 2024 (WSIS+20) in Geneva, Switzerland. This event, which takes place from May 27 to 31, 2024, is the largest annual global gathering of the ICT for development community.

Co-organized by ITU, UNESCO, UNDP, UNCTAD, and other United Nations organizations, WSIS+20 aims to promote a common vision of the role of ICTs in sharing information and reducing the digital divide.

It brings together decision-makers, experts, representatives of businesses, civil society and academic circles from more than 150 countries.

During his speech at the opening ceremony, Minister Radwan Abdillahi Bahdon highlighted the significant progress made by Djibouti in the development of ICT, notably the deployment of broadband infrastructure covering most of the territory, and the strategy aimed at ensure access to broadband for more than 80% of the population.

He also mentioned two major projects, Djibouti digital foundation and the Regional Digital Integration Project, intended to lay the foundations of a solid digital economy.

The Djiboutian Minister of Communication in charge of Posts and Telecommunications insisted on the importance of these initiatives for sustainable economic growth, fueled by increased adoption of digital technology by citizens, businesses and the Djiboutian government.

On the sidelines of the forum, Mr. Bahdon met several personalities from the ITU, including the director of telecommunications development, to discuss support for digital projects in Djibouti. Discussions focused on solutions for the digitalization of public services, reducing the digital divide between rural and urban areas, and strengthening the capacities of Djiboutian technicians.

The WSIS 2024 forum attracted more than 2,700 participants, including around 100 ministers and leaders of international organizations. It has been an essential platform for reviewing progress in the field of ICT and setting priorities to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Finally, note that the Djiboutian delegation, led by Mr. Radwan Abdillahi Bahdon, includes among others the ambassador and permanent representative of the Republic of Djibouti to the United Nations and other international organizations in Geneva, Mrs. Kadra Ahmed Hassan, the advisor to the permanent mission of Djibouti in Geneva, in charge of ITU issues, Mr. Hassan Said Goumaneh, the director of ICT development at MCPT, Mr. Feycal Kaireh Chirdon, the advisor to the DG of Djibouti Télécom, Mr. Khaled Naguib Ahmed , the advisor to the CEO of Djibouti Telecom, Ms. Oubah Ahmed Malow.

THE RITZ HERALD
BEYOND THE HEADLINES

U.S. Delegation Travels To WSIS+20 Forum And Ai For Good Summit

29 May 2024 – The Ritz Herlad

Ambassador Steve Lang, U.S. Coordinator for International Information and Communications Policy, and Special Envoy Eileen Donahoe, Coordinator for Digital Freedom, are in Geneva, Switzerland, leading a U.S. interagency delegation for the WSIS+20 Forum High-Level Event and AI for Good Global Summit May 27-31.

For over twenty years, the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) have guided global digital cooperation across the UN system and spurred efforts to leverage digital technologies for sustainable development. The WSIS+20 Forum High-Level Event is organized by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), UNESCO, and other UN agencies and co-hosted by the ITU and the Swiss Confederation. While at the Forum, Ambassador Lang and Special Envoy Donahoe

will highlight continued U.S. support for multistakeholder efforts to maximize the benefits of digital technologies while mitigating the risks, including to human rights and information integrity.

The AI for Good Global Summit is an opportunity for multistakeholder engagement to promote and discuss the use of AI to advance health, climate, gender, inclusive prosperity, sustainable infrastructure, and other global development priorities. AI for Good is organized by the ITU in partnership with 40 other UN agencies and co-convened with the government of Switzerland. At the event, Ambassador Lang and Special Envoy Donahoe will address U.S. priorities on AI technologies, particularly as a catalyst to accelerate progress on UN sustainable development goals.

GULF ⚓ TIMES

ITU recognises National Cybersecurity Agency at WSIS Awards

30 May 2024 – The Gulf Times

The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) honoured the National Cybersecurity Agency during the champions project of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) Prizes 2024, at the ITU headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland.

The event was attended by National Cybersecurity Agency president Eng. Abdul Rahman bin Ali al-Farahid al-Maliki, and Qatar's Permanent Representative to the UN Office in Geneva, HE Dr Hind Abdulrahman al-Muftah.

This recognition follows the selection of the National Cybersecurity Agency's Cyber Eco project among the top four global projects in the category of building confidence and security in the use of information and communications technology (ICT).

Al-Maliki said that the honour reflects Qatar's excellence and its continuous efforts to keep pace with rapid developments in the cyberspace and to enhance cybersecurity across all segments of society.

The Cyber Eco project, an initiative targeting students in both public and private schools, as well as teachers and students' parents, employs flexible awareness tools, including training kits, printed and electronic training games, cyber stories, instructional guides, and graduation projects.

The Cyber Eco project aims to raise awareness among students at various educational levels about cybersecurity and digital safety concepts, enhancing their abilities to use the internet and modern communication technologies safely and effectively.

dayofdubai
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Digital Dubai Wins Two Awards At WSIS 2024

31 May 2024 – The Gulf Times

Digital Dubai has proudly announced its success in winning two prestigious awards at the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) 2024, organized by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU). This year's forum featured innovative initiatives and projects from over 193 countries.

Awards And Recognition

The awards were revealed during a special ceremony held at ITU headquarters in Geneva. Digital Dubai received accolades for its "Smart Employee" application initiative in the category of ICT applications in all aspects of life, outshining 360 other projects from various countries. The "Be Aware" initiative also secured second place in the media category.

Statements From Leadership

H.E. Matar Al Hemeiri, Chief Executive of Digital Dubai Government Est, commented on the achievement: "Digital solutions and AI-enabled technologies offer a wide array of options that contribute to providing integrated digital experiences that meet customers' needs and support the

emirate's vision of enhancing quality of life and well-being. Winning two global prestigious awards reflects Digital Dubai team's efforts to embrace innovation as a main pillar that grants an added value to our initiatives and enhances their quality and efficiency."

Significance Of The Awards

The "Smart Employee" application initiative triumphed after a rigorous competition and e-voting process involving more than 2 million people. A thorough and thoughtful evaluation of the participating projects was then conducted by a competent jury.

"We would like to congratulate all the teams that have actively contributed to the digitalization of life in Dubai and enhancing its competitive edge globally. This win constitutes a strong incentive and impetus for further efforts to provide more qualitative solutions to different clients in the government and private sectors. It also underscores our increasing interest in spreading community awareness and focusing on the importance of digitization," added H.E. Matar Al Hemeiri.

WSIS Forum

WSIS is an annual event that attracts specialists in information and communication technologies from around the world. The forum provides a platform for sharing best practices and innovative solutions aimed at improving digital experiences globally.

Algeria, Rwanda, Tanzania honoured at WSIS

31 May 2024 – CAJ News Africa

3 African countries have been internationally honoured for showcasing leading efforts to bridge the digital divide fostering digital inclusion, and drive socio-economic progress on a global scale.

The awards at the ongoing World Summit on Information Society (WSIS) in Geneva, Switzerland hosted by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) awarded Algeria, Rwanda and Tanzania for their role in promotion of information and communication technology (ICTs) for development.

The three African countries won top innovative awards that ensured their citizens were not excluded in socio-economic progress.

Algeria's Digitization Association for Technology and Science (DATS) was honoured for its Center for Digitization and Documentation of Heritage and Arts Setif project in the cultural diversity and identity, linguistic diversity and local content.

Rwanda's Check Me projected was rewarded in ICT applications: benefits in all aspects of life (E-health) for implementing an AI-powered e-health platform aimed at combating breast cancer in Africa by addressing awareness gaps, accessibility issues, and high healthcare costs through education, self-screening guidance, and connectivity with specialists and survivors.

Also winning the top award was Internet Society Tanzania Chapter (ISOC-Tz) & Partner Organization for Digital Africa & ISOC Foundation , a Tanzania Digital Inclusion Project (TADIP) recognised for

helping citizens an easy access to information and knowledge, a development ITU stated that it bridged the digital divide in Tanzania by providing affordable Internet access, digital skills training, and community engagement initiatives, thereby fostering socio-economic development and inclusivity.

Speaking at the WSIS event, ITU Secretary-General, Doreen Bogdan-Martin, said the WSIS prizes recognized innovative technological approaches to support sustainable development in line with advance the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals.

"This year's WSIS Prizes demonstrate the innovation and energy that exist to find technological solutions to some of the globe's biggest challenges," said Bogdan-Martin.
"These are the creative contributions that the world needs in our effort to advance the UN Sustainable Development Goals."

Eighteen other countries, whose technological projects were rewarded includes China's Large-Capacity Wide-Area Data Express for Scientific Computing Breakthroughs, India's Smartpur, the United States of America's One-stop AI Solution for content creators to go viral – consistently and Saudi Arabia's Saudi Data and AI Authority (SDAIA), which Empowers Disaster Response in Northern Mindanao through the use of Local Radio Networks.

Other technological projects honoured were from Philippines, Indonesia, Bangladesh, Mexico, Azerbaijan, Oman, Spain, United Arab Emirates, Thailand, Malaysia and Argentina.

UAE's 'Cyber Pulse' initiative wins prestigious honour at WSIS Prizes 2024

2 June 2024 – CAJ News Africa

For the second running year, the UAE has won a prestigious award of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) Prizes 2024, which recognise the best in tech projects to support sustainable development.

Winners from around the world were honoured for innovative approaches to advance the UN Sustainable Development Goals during a special award ceremony organised by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) at its headquarters in Geneva, with initiatives and projects presented by more than 193 countries.

The UAE topped the world in the number of awards received at the World Summit on the Information Society in Geneva, with a total of 6 prestigious international awards, reflecting the UAE's leading global position in leveraging advanced technology to achieve sustainable development goals and improve the quality of digital life.

The UAE Cyber Security Council's ''Cyber Pulse'' - a comprehensive national initiative that promotes a culture of social responsibility by securing the country's cyberspace and consolidating the concept of cyber national loyalty - was among the champion projects that promote the role of governments and all stakeholders in the promotion of ICTs for development.

The initiative aims to enhance digital protection, ensure a safe digital transformation, increase digital awareness among members of society, and enable them to use the achievements of digital technology in a less threatening environment and achieve the country's goals in sustainable development, as well as the initiative includes workshops and sessions on information security incidents.

The Cyber Security Council's initiative outperformed several projects submitted from around the world in recognition of the exceptional efficiency in applying the best global practices and standards in the field of cybersecurity.

The Cyber Security Council said the award is a culmination of the UAE's unwavering commitment to building a secure and reliable digital society, in light of ongoing efforts to develop and enhance the country's cybersecurity capabilities.

Mohamed Al Kuwaiti, Head of the Cyber Security Council of the UAE Government, said, "The winning of the "Cyber Pulse" initiative for a prestigious award for the second consecutive year from the International Telecommunication Union is a new international testament to the UAE's commitment to building a secure and reliable digital society and the country's efforts in launching inspiring initiatives that contribute to strengthening cybersecurity culture among young people.'

Genève Internationale: Monika Gehner - UIT - WSIS+20

3 June 2024 – Radio Cité Genève [machine-translated]

The World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), celebrating twenty years of global cooperation in the field of the information society, was held from May 27 to 31.

By bringing together leaders, experts and players from all horizons, the WSIS provided an opportunity to assess the progress made and define future strategies.

This multi-sector event highlights technological advances, digital inclusion, and contemporary challenges such as cybersecurity and artificial intelligence. With over 13,000 digital projects aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), WSIS has played a crucial role in bridging the digital divide and promoting gender equality. The forum includes high-level dialogues, interactive sessions and exhibitions, and strives to integrate youth and diverse stakeholders to shape effective and inclusive digital governance for the future.

Monika Gehner, Head of ITU's Corporate Communications Division, is interviewed by Épiphane Amanfo.
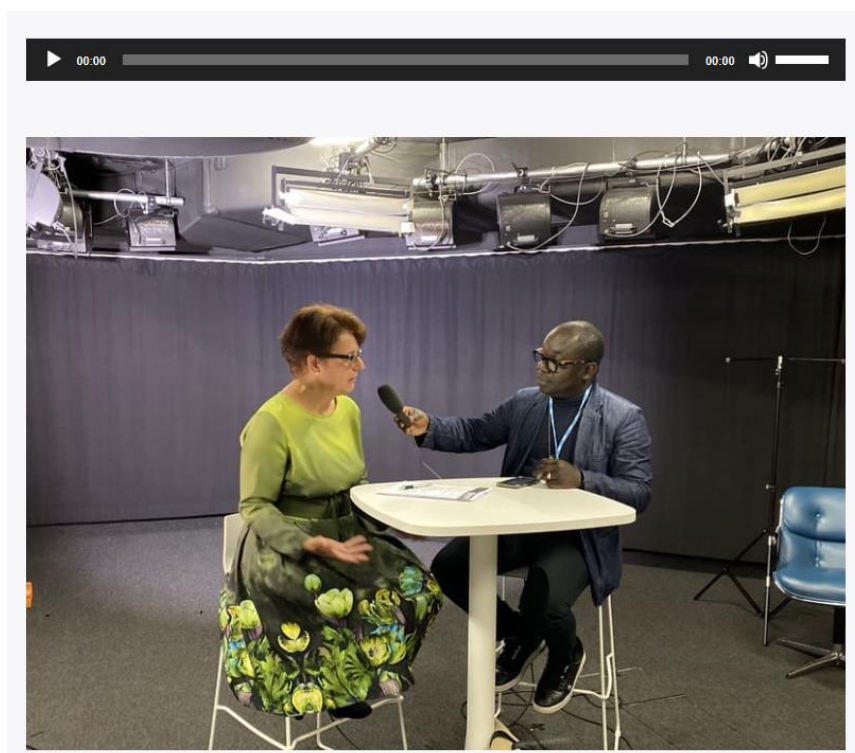
The UN Brief

WSIS+20 Brings Together Policymakers in Digital Transformation

4 June 2024 – UN Brief

The World Summit on the Information Society, WSIS+20, and the AI for Good Global Summit closed and our minds are brimming with ideas and possibilities and much greater awareness of the risks of AI and digital transformations that do not answer a fundamental question: who does it serve?

There is a growing call among many quarters for people at the center of new and emerging technologies development and deployment to make our societies more just, more prosperous, and to make sure that equitable wealth distribution occurs faster. No growing the pie to later distribute it, that is so Reaganomics and Thatcherism, so anachronic, so crude, so passé. It is time for a new New Deal.

The World Summit on the Information Society can work to focus its next edition to strengthen the presence of governments beyond telecoms and digital ministers, and bring to the fold ministers of finance, education, climate, and health, as well as private sector partners that operate in these four areas, with a good balance of Big Tech and SMEs, and increase the presence of academia.

News Media researchers, academics, and leaders from small to large news publications could also be a focus of more sessions, to increase visibility of the importance of integrating policymakers and industry perspectives to deliver greater inclusion and economic opportunity, and the sustainability of news organisations.

We speak often about the news media being the pillar of democracy but in general policymakers and UN fora do not place it center and front. The conversation around digital transformation does not

include the question of integrity in news and how emerging tech does not work to support the industry.

International Telecommunication Union WSIS+20 high-level event and Global Summit on Artificial Intelligence for Good organized in Geneva

2 June 2024 – Zi Dong Hua [machine-translated]

From May 27 to 31, the International Telecommunication Union (hereinafter referred to as ITU) World Summit on the Information Society 20-year review (WSIS+20) high-level activities and the "Artificial Intelligence for Good" Global Summit was held in Geneva, Switzerland. Mr. Shan Zhongde, Vice Minister of the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology, attended the meeting and delivered a speech.

At the Ministerial Roundtable Forum of ITU's WSIS+20 High-Level Event, Mr. Shan said that China has always been a staunch supporter, participant and contributor to WSIS visions and actions. In order to actively respond to the risks and challenges brought by the development of emerging technologies, all parties should insist on prioritizing development and bridging the digital divide among different countries and people; insist on innovation-driven and building a win-win innovation ecology; and insist on action-oriented and help realize the United Nations' sustainable development goals with pragmatic initiatives.

At the governance dialogue meeting of the main forum of the "Artificial Intelligence Governance Day", which was attended by high-level officials from China, the United States, the European Commission, Japan, South Korea and Switzerland, Shan Zhongde said that the Global Artificial Intelligence

Governance Initiative released by China in 2023 advocates that all parties uphold the "people-oriented" and "intelligence-oriented" concepts, and that the "people-oriented" concepts should be emphasized. The Global AI Governance Initiative, released by China in 2023, advocates that all parties should uphold the concept of "people-oriented" and "intelligence for the good" and work together to promote AI governance. We hope that all parties will follow the principles of mutual respect, equality and mutual benefit, strengthen strategic docking and policy coordination, and deepen exchanges and cooperation in the field of AI. They should strengthen capacity building, actively carry out exchanges and visits of talents and capacity training, enhance the governance capacity of developing countries, and build a common security defense. China supports the United Nations as the main channel to strengthen the global governance of artificial intelligence, and is willing to continue to strengthen communication and coordination with ITU and member states to jointly build a multi-level international industrial cooperation ecosystem of artificial intelligence to better enable high-quality sustainable development and better enable the building of a community of human destiny.

In the meantime, the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology and ITU co-organized a symposium on "Innovation and Expanding Impact: Cases of Artificial Intelligence for Good". The 40 cases submitted by 9 countries, including China, Brazil, Malaysia, Nigeria, UAE, Tanzania, Cambodia, Turkey and India, were selected for the "AI for Good" case collection. Thirteen experts from China, the United States, Zimbabwe, India and other eight countries were selected as "Artificial Intelligence for Good" scholars.

During his stay in Geneva, Shan Zhongde met with the heads of ITU, ISO, IEC and other international organizations as well as delegations from relevant countries to exchange views on strengthening cooperation in the fields of digital technology and standardization. The relevant departments and bureaus of the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology and the persons-in-charge of the subordinate units of the Ministry participated in the above activities together.

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Shaping the Future: Lessons from 20 Years of Digital Cooperation

4 June 2024 – cfr.org

Last week, world leaders met on WSIS' 20th anniversary. In keeping with WSIS commitments, leaders need to boost digital skills, use AI to advance the SDGs, and tackle tech's climate impact to create a secure, inclusive digital future.

Blog Post by Robert Opp, Guest Contributor

Last week, global leaders from governments, civil society, the private sector, the technical community and elsewhere convened in Geneva for the annual meeting of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) to reflect on the past twenty years of digital cooperation.

This year marked a special edition; a High-Level Event to mark WSIS+20.

In a rapidly expanding sea of digital policy acronyms, WSIS is an important one to know.

Twenty years ago, during landmark meetings in Geneva and Tunis, leaders from around the world and across all sectors agreed to what are known as the WSIS outcomes, articulating a vision for a world where digital technologies would empower individuals, foster inclusion and spur global development—a vision where all actors have a role to play.

This was an ambitious and impressively far-sighted agenda. At the time, one billion people were online, just 16 percent of the world's population. Those who were online then were finding their way . into vibrant and new ecosystems—Facebook, Reddit, YouTube—with excitement and optimism. The first iPhone was yet to make its debut.

The remarkable speed and scale of the development of digital technologies in the intervening twenty years means that these tools have become central to nearly every aspect of life. These advancements hold immense potential for driving innovation and development, but they also pose new challenges and risks that policymakers must navigate to ensure a safe and equitable digital future.

Though it may be unfamiliar to those who have come more recently to the digital space, the WSIS process and its multistakeholder community has played a pivotal role in global digital cooperation over the last two decades. For instance, research has shown that the Internet Governance Forum, an outcome of WSIS, has played a central role in the growth of Internet Exchange points, particularly in the Global South, while also fostering a global knowledge sharing community.

In an increasingly complex digital policy landscape, WSIS plays a unique and complementary role to other multilateral forums and initiatives focused on digital technologies. This includes the growing digital portfolios in existing institutions like the G7 and G20 as well as newer initiatives, like the Digital Cooperation Organization. Moreover, at this year's UN General Assembly, world leaders are expected to agree to a Global Digital Compact as part of the Summit of the Future. The WSIS process will have an important role to play in delivering on the Compact's ambitions for "an open, free and secure digital future for all."

As WSIS turns twenty this year, it will also undergo a review at the United Nations, an opportunity to both reaffirm its role, but also to reflect on how it might update its mandate and areas of focus (called 'action lines' in WSIS parlance) to ensure that it remains as relevant in its next twenty years. Reflecting on the work of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to support digital development in more than 120 countries, three areas emerge as critical for advancing digital cooperation.

First, delivering an inclusive digital transformation necessitates policymakers who have the knowledge and skills to craft policies that spur digital advances and manage their risks. Although already a WSIS focus area, more attention on digital capacity building, particularly for developing and least developed countries, is needed as well-equipped officials will underpin the digital transformation. This should include how to leverage data for effective policy-making, as well as support for cyber-resilience skills, which are prerequisites for thriving digital communities.

Second, while the visionaries of WSIS anticipated the transformative impact of digital technologies, the AI revolution has ushered in a new era of possibilities and challenges. As AI is integrated across a dizzying array of applications, its benefits should be equally distributed across nations. WSIS can add urgency in ensuring that artificial intelligence serves as a tool for global development. Last week in Geneva, the WSIS high-level event ran in parallel with the annual AI for Good Global Summit, an event organized by the UN International Telecommunications Union (ITU) in partnership with forty UN agencies and the Government of Switzerland, focused on leveraging AI to achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goals. This conjunction of events demonstrates an emerging critical inter-relationship between internet governance, digital development, and AI for sustainable development.

Third and finally, the last twenty years have seen a marked escalation in the global climate crisis. AI is poised to accelerate this trend, as training and running AI systems requires significant computing power and data which contribute further emissions. The WSIS outcomes identified the relationship between our natural environment and digital technologies; however, adding a greater emphasis on climate change through the WSIS review, both in the natural resource requirements and emissions produced by digital technologies and their potential to help deliver solutions, will be important to deliver on both the digital and climate transition together.

There are other areas where the WSIS outcomes could be refreshed as well. For instance, recognizing the critical role played by digital public infrastructure in development, and remedying the absence of a gender perspective. In short, there is much that can be done, while still recognizing the enduring relevance and importance of the WSIS outcomes today.

When the first WSIS meeting took place in Geneva in 2003, leaders from all sectors committed to working together to realize "a people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented digital society." WSIS has played and is poised to continue to play, perhaps with a few tweaks, a central role in delivering on this vision.

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[WSIS 2024 Awards for the world's best digital projects: Three African countries win prizes](#)

8 June 2024 – Mali Web (also in [Bamada.net](#)) [machine-translated]

The winners of the WSIS Prizes, a program that rewards innovative technological approaches in support of sustainable development, were announced at the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS)+20 Forum held in Geneva, Switzerland, at the end of May. Of the 18 recipients, three are from the African continent, namely Rwanda, Tanzania and Algeria.

According to the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) Media Center, which provided the information, in total, projects from 18 countries were rewarded with a WSIS Prize, a distinguished distinction highlighting cutting-edge initiatives aimed at bridging the digital divide, fostering digital inclusion and stimulating socio-economic progress on a global scale.

"This year's WSIS Awards shine a spotlight on the innovative activities and energy that go into finding technological solutions to some of the world's greatest challenges," said ITU Secretary-General Doreen Bogdan-Martin. "These are the creative contributions the world needs as we work to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals defined by the United Nations." Indeed, the WSIS Prizes provide a global forum aligned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Since its creation in 2012, more than 5,000 projects have been submitted as part of this program which has brought together millions of stakeholders, not forgetting voters, around successful initiatives carried out around the world which use technological solutions to meet the challenges linked to sustainable development.

During the WSIS 2024 Prizes ceremony, the Swiss Confederation and the United Arab Emirates were rewarded for the work accomplished over the past 20 years regarding the implementation of the main orientations of the WSIS.

Recall that the high-level event of the WSIS+20 Forum was held from May 27 to 31, 2024. It was an opportunity to examine the challenges and take stock of what has been accomplished in the two decades since the launch of the multi-stakeholder process that is the WSIS.

The winners of the 2024 WSIS Awards

According to the ITU media center, there was only one (01) prize at stake for each of the 18 targeted categories. 1049 submissions were registered, from 104 countries from all parts of the world, of which 360 were nominated and 18 projects were chosen as winners, i.e. one project for each category at stake.

Category 1: The role of governments and all stakeholders in promoting ICT for development. Winner: Saudi Arabia, specifically the Saudi Data and AI Authority (SDAIA) with the project: National Data Bank (NDB) and Estishraf aiming to revolutionize the governance of Saudi Arabia through data and AI, while improving sectors such as healthcare, education and transportation while fostering innovation and collaboration.

Category 2: Information and communications infrastructure. Winner: Philippines, specifically its Department of Information and Communication Technology – Region 10. Their project consists of establishing a resilient radiocommunication network in the north of the island of Mindanao in order to improve interventions in cases disaster and reduce the impact of future crises.

Category 3: Access to information and knowledge. Winner: United Republic of Tanzania, specifically the Internet Society of Tanzania Institute (ISOC-Tz). The project aims to bridge the digital divide in Tanzania by providing affordable internet access, providing training to acquire digital skills and leading initiatives for community participation, to promote socio-economic development and inclusion.

Category 4: Capacity building. Winner: Indonesia through the Organization: Perkumpulan Mitra TIK Indonesia (ICT Watch). The project, called JaWAra Intern, serves to promote digital literacy and empower communities in Indonesia through local initiatives led by local leaders, fostering an enabling internet ecosystem, strengthening digital skills and leading security awareness activities.

Category 5: Establish confidence and security in the use of ICT. Winner: Bangladesh, precisely Bangladesh Computer Council with the project: NationalConnect to provide a locally developed video conferencing platform by the Bangladesh Computer Council (BCC) to ensure uninterrupted public services and ensure continuity of education, in particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic, while promoting innovation and cost-saving measures.

Category 6: Create an enabling environment. Winner: Mexico through the Federal Telecommunications Institute (IFT). The project: to provide transparent and accessible information to users on privacy policies and terms and conditions applicable to services on various digital platforms, to empower users to make informed decisions and promote privacy. mastery of digital tools.

Category 7: ICT applications: benefits in all aspects of life (e-government). Winner: Azerbaijan, precisely its Agency for Innovation and Digital Development (IDDA) with the "MyGov" project which consists of creating a unified digital services platform that seamlessly integrates residents and public entities, offering a efficient access to public services and promoting collaboration.

Category 8: ICT applications and their contribution to all areas (e-commerce). Winner: Oman, through its Financial Services Authority (FSA), with the project: Analytical Portal (Bayanat). This involves

establishing an analytical portal (Bayanat) that facilitates the exchange of business information based on the global XBRL standard, providing accessible and reliable financial data to market participants.

Category 9: ICT applications and their contribution to all areas (cybereducation). Winner: Spain, specifically the Autonomous University of Barcelona, with the project: Young ArcHers. This involves developing effective teaching materials and accessible tools to help primary school teachers promote European cultural heritage to students, including students with disabilities and from diverse backgrounds.

Category 10: ICT applications and their contribution to all areas (telehealth). Winner: Rwanda, precisely its organization: Check Me Ltd with the project: Check Me which is an e-health platform based on AI to fight against breast cancer in Africa by remedying the problems linked to insufficiencies in terms of awareness, accessibility and high costs of health care through education, self-testing and establishing a network of relationships with specialists and people who have recovered.

Category 11: ICT applications and their contribution in all areas (cyberworking). Winner: United Arab Emirates through its Dubai Digital Authority, with the project: Smart Employee to revolutionize personnel management in public entities in Dubai by providing an innovative, user-friendly and efficient solution for various services, thereby contributing to the objectives of the city in terms of digital transformation.

Category 12: ICT applications and their contribution to all areas (cyberecology). Winner: Thailand, through its organization: Advanced Info Service Public Company Limited (AIS), with the project: AIS E-Waste+ application to revolutionize the management of waste electrical and electronic equipment in Thailand by providing a platform comprehensive plan that encourages responsible disposal and recycling through the innovative use of blockchain technology.

Category 13: ICT applications and their contribution in all areas (cyberagriculture). Winner: Malaysia, specifically its Ministry of Agriculture. Project: GeoTanaman to revolutionize Malaysian agriculture by providing a comprehensive digital platform for farmers to manage, analyze and present geospatial information on food crops, thereby promoting resilience and self-sufficiency in the agricultural sector.

Category 14: ICT applications and their contribution to all fields (cybersciences). Winner: China, specifically China Mobile Communications Group Co., Ltd. The Project: Address the inefficiencies and security risks associated with wide-area transmission of large volumes of data in scientific research by providing an efficient and cost-effective network-based online data transmission solution collective computing and intelligent planning using AI.

Category 15: Cultural diversity and identity, linguistic diversity and local content. Winner: Algeria, notably Digitization Association for Technology and Science (DATS). The project: document the heritage and arts of Sétif in the virtual world, digitize the works in two-dimensional and three-dimensional formats and obtain certificates of ownership in the virtual world with tradable cryptoassets (NFT), thus strengthening protection and conservation cultural heritage and the arts.

Category 16: Media. Winner: United States of America, through the organization: Upview, with the project: Unique AI solution to create viral content – consistently. It is an AI-powered development platform for video content creators, aimed at automating video strategy, supporting execution, and driving distribution for content creators using a proprietary AI technology.

Category 17: Ethical dimensions of the information society. Winner: India, precisely Nokia with the project: Smartpur consisting of empowering and supporting local communities in India through digital

technologies, with a priority focusing on connecting the unconnected and providing access to essential services in areas of health, education, livelihoods, financial inclusion and governance.

Category 18: International and regional cooperation. Winner: Argentina, precisely South School on Internet Governance, with the project: University degree in Internet governance and regulation to train young students and professionals from various disciplines in understanding the importance of Internet governance and of its implications for the economies of developing countries, to strengthen their representation in discussions on global Internet governance.

Key external press releases and statements

Statement by Pedro Manuel Moreno, Deputy Secretary-General of UN Trade and Development (UNCTAD)

27 May 2024 – Statement

Dear Tomas Lamanauskas, Deputy-Secretary General of ITU,

Dear Tawfik Jelassi, Assistant Director-General for Communication and Information of UNESCO,

Dear Robert Opp, Chief Digital Officer of UNDP,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am pleased to join our fellow co-organizers in welcoming you to the WSIS+20 High-Level Event.

This WSIS Forum comes at a very timely moment as member states and other stakeholders are currently discussing the Global Digital Compact and preparing for the Summit of the Future in September.

We need the power of the digital economy for a more inclusive and sustainable future. We are merely six years away from the deadline of the 2030 Agenda but only 15 per cent of the SDGs target are on track.

While the digital economy and digitalization offers a wealth of opportunities, the digital landscape continues to be challenged by persistent digital divides or ever evolving cybersecurity threats. Access to digital connectivity remains highly uneven. Today, a staggering 65 per cent of the population in the least developed countries still lack access to digital connectivity. The cross-cutting impact and growing presence, and concerns, of digital technologies in our daily lives underscore the urgency of amplifying digital cooperation.

This year's forum will serve as a prelude to an important occasion next year – the 20th anniversary of the World Summit on the Information Society. It is a good moment to reflect on the achievements of the WSIS community of stakeholders, who have made incredible strides in harnessing the power of digital technologies for development.

At UN Trade and Development (UNCTAD), we have been proud to leveraging the digital economy for development and fostering digital cooperation.

For example, through our role as the Secretariat of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development. The CSTD facilitates intergovernmental policy discussions on science, technology, and information for development. Just last month, we had the 27th session of the CSTD here in Geneva, marking almost three decades of cooperation!

The Commission has been mandated to conduct the WSIS+20 Review through widespread consultation and prepare a report.

Consultations were held at the Internet Governance Forum in Kyoto in October last year, as well as at the UNCTAD eWeek here at the CICG in December. The eWeek has become a key actor for inclusive debate and dialogue for the digital future. The intersessional meeting of the CSTD in Lisbon in November 2023 also included a full discussion on the review. Then, an online questionnaire gathered further inputs between January and March 2024. And only last month, the CSTD held a high-level panel on progress made at the regional and international level and discussed the WSIS+20 review.

So far, the consultation has shown widespread support for the multistakeholder approach to policy development and to the design of governance frameworks. Stakeholders have stressed the importance of avoiding fragmentation of the digital ecosystem, the need for better data to monitor progress towards achievement of WSIS outcomes, and to seek harmonization between the outcomes of WSIS+20 and the Global Digital Compact.

The process is not finished yet. I encourage all stakeholders to actively engage in the consultation activities at the regional level from May to December 2024. This will ensure that in 2025 we have a solid report on the 20 years of achievements, lessons learned, and future challenges of the WSIS action lines.

In the review of the e-business action line implementation, which we co-facilitate with the International Trade Centre and the Universal Postal Union, international cooperation is also crucial. These three organizations together with 32 other entities of the eTrade for all initiative have helped channel technical assistance to developing countries to improve their digital readiness.

Before I stop, let me reemphasize that UN Trade and Development remains deeply committed to enabling development gains from digitalization. We look forward to engaging with all stakeholders here in Geneva, and across the globe – wherever discussions on the digital economy unfold.

Thank you.

Algerian Projects Win Awards At WSIS Prize 2024 Contest

28 May 2024 – Algeria press release

Algerian projects selected for the contest of the Forum of the World Summit on the Information Society « WSIS Prizes 2024 » organized annually by the ITU, have distinguished themselves with honorable results worldwide.

Indeed, the Project of Center for Digitization and Documentation of Heritage and Arts (Sétif), submitted by the Association of science and technology digitization, has won the first prize in the category of cultural diversity and identity, linguistic diversity and local content. The prize was granted by ITU's Secretary-general in presence of the Minister of Posts and Telecommunications.

In the same vein, three other projects were nominated to the final of the contest with distinguished results. It is about those submitted by : National employment agency (ANEM), national corporation

SONELGAZ and a research team made up of BOUGATAYA Nesrine, HACHEMI Amira, HADJI Ayat and BOUMENSOURA Warda.

It is worth pointing out to the fact that ITU's members are eligible for participating in this contest through stakeholders from ICT field, i.e. government bodies, economic operators or innovators with ICT projects, accomplished projects, projects in the final stages or those not yet embarked provided that they are worth supporting and distinction.

In addition to the eighteenth (18) laureates and seventy two (72) extra laureates to the WSIS Prize 2024, the distinguished projects will be published in the WSIS stocktaking : success stories 2024 » while all other projects and activities presented in this contest will be involved in the « report of the stocktaking WSIS D 2024 » .

International Telecommunication Union and Linux Foundation Announce Intent to Launch the OpenWallet Forum

28 May 2024 – Linux Foundation press release

At the WSIS+20 Forum High-Level Event, the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and the Linux Foundation announced their intent to launch the OpenWallet Forum, to help drive multi-stakeholder collaboration and discussions on interoperable digital wallets. The OpenWallet Forum will be hosted by the Linux Foundation and ITU, offering a platform for governments to engage with standards bodies and companies working on digital wallets.

The new collaboration builds on the success of the OpenWallet Foundation, which will remain focused on bringing developers together to work on open source software for secure interoperable wallets. The OpenWallet Foundation hosts core open source components for secure interoperable wallets, and ITU will drive supporting multi-stakeholder collaboration while UNICC will work with the Linux Foundation to provide a full mirror of all OpenWallet Foundation's git-based source code repositories. This collaboration will ensure that the software is available to a global audience. It will further provide a vehicle for channeling software contributions from UNICC partners and affiliates upstream to the OpenWallet Foundation's repositories.

Detailed information on opportunities to participate will be shared by the OpenWallet Foundation and the ITU closer to the launch of the OpenWallet Forum. For updates and news related to the OpenWallet Foundation, please visit openwallet.foundation.

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Supporting Quotes

"Digital public infrastructure is key everywhere, but especially in developing countries. We look forward to driving multi-stakeholder collaboration around the development and deployment of globally interoperable wallets that help close the gap between the digital 'haves' and 'have nots."
– Doreen Bogdan-Martin, ITU Secretary-General.

"At UNICC, we are dedicated to openness, security, and human-centered approaches in developing digital solutions for our partners within the UN family. Therefore, we are thrilled to partner with the Linux Foundation and contribute to the OpenWallet git-based code repositories in close collaboration with ITU. This partnership is an excellent opportunity to further promote open source solutions for good by reusing and adapting software developed by UNICC and its partners, with a key potential to advance the Sustainable Development Goals through greater digital cooperation."
– Sameer Chauhan, Director, UNICC.

"Switzerland will continue to support all actors and processes that cooperate constructively to develop and implement our shared goals. We will do this not only through strengthening inclusive dialogue platforms, but also through supporting concrete multi-stakeholder partnerships, such as GIGA or the Open Wallet Forum, two initiatives co-lead by ITU and its partners."
– Albert Rösti, Federal Councillor of Switzerland.

"The Swiss Government is planning to launch its electronic identity in 2026. It shall be useful, secure and interoperable. For the latter, we have joined forces at the Governmental Advisory Council within the OpenWallet Foundation. We are looking forward to double down our efforts within the OpenWallet Forum to be hosted by the ITU."
– Rolf Rauschenbach, Information Officer E-ID, Federal Office of Justice.

"As the world's leading home for collaboration on open source software, hardware, standards, and data, the Linux Foundation deeply cares about digital public infrastructure and views our cooperation with ITU and UNICC as an important building block in the advancement of open source as a public good."
– Jim Zemlin, CEO of the Linux Foundation.

"From the start of OpenWallet 15 months ago we felt that the future of digital wallets should be shaped by a broad multi-stakeholder effort so we provided a space for government officials to speak with each other and the private sector. I am truly excited about our cooperation with ITU and UNICC which is designed to make it as easy as possible for anyone to join this global effort."
– Daniel Goldscheider, Founder and Executive Director of the OpenWallet Foundation.

AT&T Connects

AT&T Makes Additional Pledge to ITU's Partner2Connect Digital Coalition

29 May 2024 – AT&T statement

By Claudia Selli, VP International External & Regulatory Affairs, AT&T

Connecting people to greater possibility is why we exist, so this work is core to what we do. Connectivity can be a social determinant of health, education, and prosperity. With prosperity so tied to connectivity, we believe everyone should be able to participate.

Specifically, AT&T is committed to helping bridge the digital divide through efforts that promote broadband affordability, availability, and adoption. We are also investing our resources and knowledge to advance the digital skills needed to thrive in the classrooms and workplaces of today and tomorrow, specifically through AT&T Connected Learning℠. Our company also contributes to programs focused on empowering girls and young women with tech and STEM skills, as well as

programs focused on increasing the representation of women in STEM careers and supporting women entrepreneurs.

With a continuation of these priorities and passions in mind, AT&T is a proud supporter of the Partner2Connect Digital Coalition (P2C) led by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU). We welcome P2C as a platform to engage all stakeholders to mobilize and announce new resources, partnerships, and commitments to achieve universal and meaningful connectivity. I was so pleased to participate in the Partner2Connect High-Level Panel in Geneva yesterday, as part of the WSIS+20 High-Level Forum, where I had the privilege of announcing a major additional pledge from AT&T towards P2C.

While P2C aims recognize the priority need of connecting those in least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, and small island developing states (LDCs, LLDCs, and SIDS), the Coalition has the goal of connecting the entire world – calling attention to a need for closing the digital divide for populations everywhere. Similarly, AT&T wants to connect the unconnected – including bolstering connectivity amongst historically disadvantaged populations. So, in addition to our prior P2C pledges, I am happy to share that AT&T is extending their commitment from $2 billion to $5 billion this decade: to help 25 million people get and stay connected by 2030.

At AT&T, we care about connecting people. It's our purpose. And why we have committed $5 billion since 2021 to unlock the benefits of the internet for millions of people. But we can't do it alone, and neither can anyone else. It's going to take a collective effort – public and private organizations working together – to get there.
Our commitment will address the main barriers to connectivity – affordability and adoption – for those who need it most.

To achieve this, AT&T plans to expand its Connected Learning program resources to reach more people through efforts such as laptop distributions and at Connected Learning Centers across the country. All these efforts help students and families get connected and find value in that connectivity. Through AT&T's Connected Learning Centers (CLCs), we collaborate with community-based non-profit organizations like the Boys and Girls Clubs of America to provide digital skilling courses and workshops catering uniquely to the needs of K-12 students, seniors, adults in need of workforce readiness skills and Americans with disabilities. We've already reached more than one million people in need through digital literacy, devices and internet connections.

Each Connected Learning Center receives a charitable contribution, is equipped with AT&T internet and computers often supplied by corporate partners like Dell and receives support from AT&T Believes volunteers through digital literacy and learning resources and workshops. Additionally, we work with the Public Library Association and the National PTA to provide in-library and after-school digital skilling workshops through ScreenReady™, The Achievery and Digital Navigators programs. Since 2021, we have opened 41 CLCs in 16 states, with plans to have 52 CLCs open by mid-2024.

"Ambitious initiatives like the Partner2Connect Digital Coalition require ambitious partners," said ITU Secretary-General Doreen Bogdan-Martin. "Through this strong commitment to Partner2Connect, AT&T sends a strong signal that we all need to come together to tackle affordability and other barriers to meaningful connectivity for disadvantaged populations everywhere."

Working to close the digital divide is the linchpin of AT&T's mission to leave no one behind when it comes to online opportunity. This commitment is a pillar of the work the company does to help build digital infrastructure – which is also a key tenet of Partner2Connect. This is the fourth individual

pledge AT&T has made to P2C, in addition to two joint pledges made with Canada Learning Code, and with the United States Telecommunication Training Institute (USTTI).

ITU – the United Nations agency for telecommunications/ICTs – announced the launch of P2C in September 2021, aiming to mobilize commitments to foster meaningful connectivity and sustainable digital transformation in communities across the globe. Partner2Connect encourages governments, companies and other organizations to submit pledges across four focus areas: ACCESS – Connecting People Everywhere; ADOPTION – Empowering Communities; VALUE CREATION – Building Digital Ecosystems; and ACCELERATE – Incentivizing Investments. This pledge aligns with P2C Focus Areas 1 and 2: Access and Adoption, and our efforts around this pledge is targeted to impact several groups, including children, older persons, Indigenous peoples, and persons with disabilities. ITU's aim with Partner2Connect – making bold moves that inspire transformational change – aligns closely with what we do at AT&T. To date, P2C has mobilized over $49 billion worth of pledges representing expertise, resources, and investment for policies, projects and programs seeking to reach the world's hardest-to-connect communities, with the aim of mobilizing $100 billion by the end of 2026.

Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
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Geneva at the centre of high-level discussions on digitalisation and AI

30 May 2024 – Switzerland press release

Biel/Bienne, 30.05.2024 - At the WSIS+20 Forum High-Level Event, Federal Councillor Albert Rösti emphasised the challenges posed by developments in the global information society. He emphasised the importance of International Geneva in developing consensus-based solutions in the field of digitalisation. The AI4Good Global Summit, one of the world's most important events on artificial intelligence, is being held in Geneva at the same time.

More than 20 years after the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), the WSIS+20 Forum High-Level Event is taking place in Geneva from 27 to 31 May 2024 and was chaired by Federal Councillor Albert Rösti. At the event, the participants took stock of the extent to which the goals set by WSIS had been achieved. WSIS was organised by the United Nations together with Switzerland in Geneva in 2003. Over 20 years ago, the international community agreed on the vision of an information society for everyone.

At the opening of the event, Mr Rösti remarked that although the global community had achieved a great deal in the area of digitalisation over the past two decades, it had not yet reached its goal. Many people still do not have access to the internet or are unable to recognise potential dangers when surfing the web. At the same time, phenomena such as artificial intelligence (AI) have made the process of developing digitalisation equitably on a global scale more complex.

Faced with these challenges, we still need to ensure that all stakeholders from politics, business, science and civil society are involved appropriately. Mr Rösti suggested that this can happen in existing international organisations such as the International Telecommunication Union ITU and discussion platforms such as the WSIS Forum and the United Nations Internet Governance Forum, all of which are based in Geneva. The insights gained at the event will now be incorporated into the preparatory work on a global digital pact, which it is hoped will be adopted at the end of the year during the UN Summit of the Future. These findings will also be taken into account when the WSIS results are reviewed in autumn 2025.

Summit on artificial intelligence

The AI4Good Global Summit, a major global event in the field of artificial intelligence, takes place from 29 to 31 May parallel to the WSIS+20 Forum event. Artificial intelligence is increasingly affecting all people. Experts, scientists and members of civil society present and discuss their projects at the event. They show how AI could contribute to achieving the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals. Numerous Swiss companies and universities that contribute to the development of AI, particularly in the medical field, take this opportunity to present themselves and their findings.

Switzerland as host

Switzerland hosts the WSIS+20 Forum High-Level Event and the AI4Good Global Summit along with the ITU. It has supported the WSIS process since 2003 and has been a partner of the AI4Good Global Summit since 2017. Both events receive political and financial support, and allow Switzerland to promote International Geneva as a centre of digital governance.

The General Personnel Council receives a prestigious international award

30 May 2024 – Palestinian General Personnel Council

Geneva – Together – In a new global achievement added to Palestine's record of successes, the General Staff Council was crowned as the champion of the World Summit on the Information Society Awards (WSIS 2024), organized by the International Telecommunication Union, one of the prestigious United Nations institutions in Switzerland.

The International Telecommunication Union announced that the General Civil Service Commission, representing the State of Palestine, won the international award for the 'Civil Service Digitization' project during the 2024 World Summit on the Information Society, held in Geneva, Switzerland, during the period May 27-31.

This award is considered one of the most important awards in the world in the information technology sector that all countries of the world strive to obtain. Palestine has once again demonstrated its ability to compete and excel over many developed countries of the world. This is not the first time for the General Personnel Council to have previously won the cup Gold medal for achieving first place globally in the year 2022 for the 'E-Recruitment' project.

The head of the General Personnel Council, Musa Abu Zeid, said that this victory comes to prove to the world that the Palestinian people are capable of achieving achievements and competing with the most important developed countries in the world despite the challenges and obstacles imposed by the unjust occupier on our people and the institutions of our state, and it reflects the ambitious and creative spirit of the Palestinian people in facing challenges and excelling over them. Global level.

He added, "Despite the difficult circumstances that our Palestinian people are experiencing, Palestine was able, by relying on human resources and at a financial cost that was almost negligible compared

to similar experiences in countries of the world, to excel and win the "Civil Service Digitization" project and the project that relied on digital procedures and ending paper transactions between government departments and the Civil Service Bureau of the year in the category 'The Role of Governments and All Stakeholders in Promoting ICT in Development,' where the project was able to successfully overcome the four stages of competition and stood out among more than 1,049 projects from around the world from more than 100 countries, and was crowned as the champion of the WSIS Awards. 2024, beating 17 countries participating in the competition, such as: the Emirates, Qatar, Singapore, the Netherlands, Indonesia, Brazil, Mexico, Sri Lanka, Turkey, Malaysia, Tanzania, Kazakhstan, Uruguay, Morocco and Kenya.

Abu Zeid stressed that this prominent achievement indicates the sound planning and development in the civil service sector that the State of Palestine has achieved, its institutions and human resources, and its ability to innovate and excel even in the most difficult circumstances. The civil service digitization project was developed through a strategy aimed at complete digital transformation and strengthening governance procedures, and providing government services remotely around the clock, to provide the best services to the Palestinian citizen.

Minister Abu Zeid concluded his speech before the representatives of the countries of the world, 'We dedicate this great achievement to our steadfast people stationed in Gaza and all of Palestine, and we affirm that our Palestinian people, who love life like the rest of the peoples of the world, possess the ability and great experience in various fields. This victory is not just an ordinary victory, but rather it is Global recognition of Palestine's ability to lead in the field of information technology and human resources management, and it is the culmination of human resources' continuous efforts in innovation and development.

Abu Zeid expressed his pride in the great efforts made by Palestine in developing the civil service digitization project and the service sector in general. Demonstrating the permanent commitment to continue working to improve government services and provide them with the highest levels of quality and efficiency, stressing the importance of technology in improving the lives of citizens and raising the efficiency of government services, and continuing to work to achieve more achievements that take Palestine to exceptional and prestigious places. He also expressed his pride and pride in his sons among the employees of the Civil Service Bureau. Who are the ones who make great achievements for their country. He said, 'I am proud to be one of those colleagues who moved their country, Palestine, from the local to the regional to the global with their sincerity, dedication, and love for their country. They have all my love and respect.'

WSIS+20 Brings Together Policymakers in Digital Transformation

7 June 2024 – Telefonica blogpost

The WSIS meeting, a major multilateral forum, marks twenty years of progress in developing and implementing the governance principles of the World Summit on the Information Society. What is the business perspective on the mechanisms for moving towards an inclusive and sustainable society?

The WSIS+20 High-Level Forum (World Summit on the Information Society or WSIS+20) was held in Geneva from 27 to 31 May 2024, co-hosted by ITU and the Swiss Confederation, and organised jointly with UNESCO, UNDP and UNCTAD. The event featured nearly 200 sessions and brought together some

8,000 participants (6,000 in person and 2,000 online) from 160 countries. The WSIS is one of the most important multilateral forum dedicated to Internet Governance.

This edition of the 2024 WSIS+20 High Level Meeting is a milestone. It signifies the realisation of twenty years of progress in the development and implementation of the governance principles of the World Summit on the Information Society, which took place essentially in two phases: Geneva in 2003 and Tunis in 2005. The Forum has served as a platform to take stock of achievements and trends, challenges and opportunities.

Business perspectives on the road to the WSIS+20 review

During the panel "Sharing business perspectives on the road to the WSIS+20 review" organised by the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), we presented Telefónica's vision on Digital Inclusion and the success story of Internet para Todos in Peru as an example of an innovative mechanism to improve the deployment of telecommunications infrastructure in rural and remote access areas, based on multi-stakeholder partnerships, adapted technologies and flexible regulation.

On the other hand, in terms of connectivity, the challenge of connecting the unconnected is already becoming above all a challenge of adoption, in a context where 95% of the population is in the 3G/4G/5G coverage footprint (and this when the electricity grid does not reach 92% of the population), while the population that regularly connects to the internet does not exceed 67%. This paradigm shift implies the need to refocus public policies to facilitate the adoption of digital services and technologies, thus promoting greater digital inclusion, without losing sight of other basic infrastructures (for example, only 57% of the population uses sanitation services).

Champions in WSIS Awards 2024

As part of the summit, the WSIS Awards are presented as a mechanism to showcase projects and activities that harness the power of ICTs to promote inclusive and sustainable development.

Telefónica has been nominated for 4 transformative projects. The aforementioned "Internet para Todos" project in Peru in Action Line C.2, which corresponds to Information and Communication Infrastructure. "Mujeres en Red" in category C.4, which corresponds to capacity building, and "Conecta empleo" in the category of e-employment, ICT applications for guidance and education in the digital transition. It is worth mentioning that Telefónica's "Eco-Smart Solutions" project was highlighted as "Champion" in the category in which it participated. These are services offered by Telefónica based on connectivity, the Internet of Things (IoT), cloud, big data, artificial intelligence or 5G, which not only generate operational benefits and cost savings, but also environmental benefits. Specifically, they reduce energy and water consumption, CO_2 emissions and promote the circular economy.

Towards the Future Summit and beyond

Twenty years ago, the WSIS established the framework for global digital cooperation with the vision of building people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented information and knowledge societies. Over these years, the digital society has grown exponentially and the WSIS has been one of the main mechanisms for its governance. Based on the multistakeholder principle, governance mechanisms need to be adapted to include new disruptive technologies, such as artificial intelligence, while avoiding dysfunction and duplication. This was one of the main lines of discussion throughout the meeting.

In the context of the Global Digital Compact initiative, which will be concluded at the Summit of the Future in September, the modernisation of governance mechanisms is one of the key action points. In our view, there is a need to move from Internet governance to inclusive digital governance, which will allow for the balanced development of digitalisation based on high-capacity, next-generation telecommunications networks, while avoiding fragmentation of the Internet through the establishment of common standards.

QUICK LINKS

- WSIS+20 Forum High-Level Event 2024 Official Website: https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/Forum/2024/
- Open Consultation Process: https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Home/Consultations
- Agenda: https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/Forum/2022/Pages/Agenda
- Facebook WSIS Process: https://www.facebook.com/WSISprocess
- WSIS Flash: https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/stocktaking/Flash/Newsletter
- Twitter WSIS Process #WSIS: https://twitter.com/wsisprocess
- WSIS on YouTube: http://www.youtube.com/wsisprocess
- WSIS Stocktaking: https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/stocktaking
- United Nations Group on the Information Society: www.ungis.org
- Partnership for Measuring ICT for Development: http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/ict/partnership/

For further information please write to the WSIS Secretariat at wsis-info@itu.int

INVITATION FOR WSIS+20 HIGH-LEVEL EVENT 2025

The WSIS Forum 2025 will be branded as a WSIS+20 High-Level Event 2025 in Geneva and serve as a platform for discussion of the WSIS+20 review and the WSIS Action Lines and to take stock of the achievements and key trends, challenges and opportunities since the Geneva Plan of Action. The WSIS+20 High-Level Event 2025 will take place from **7 to 11 July 2025** in Geneva, Switzerland.