

# Foreword

The World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) was held in two phases: in Geneva, from 10-12 December 2003 and in Tunis, from 16-18 November 2005. The Summit set out a vision of a future Information Society in which Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) are available anywhere, anytime and to anyone. The Tunis phase focused on the challenge of realising this vision, by turning principles into actions. It is in accepting this challenge, and in implementing the WSIS outcomes, that our work continues today.

Based on the unique multi-stakeholder approach adopted at WSIS, new responsibilities were taken on by all stakeholders – governments, business entities, civil society and international organisations – for implementing the WSIS *Plan of Action* adopted in Geneva. The Summit identified the need for an effective follow-up mechanism, including a methodology for evaluation of the WSIS implementation. With the launch of this new series of *World Information Society Reports*, ITU and its partners are providing a new tool for monitoring progress in building the Information Society.

This inaugural edition presents the **Digital Opportunity Index** (DOI) as a composite index, which was endorsed by WSIS as part of the approved evaluation methodology. It has been designed to assess progress in creating digital opportunity and bridging the digital divide. The DOI shows how mobile connectivity is transforming telecommunications in many developing countries around the world, while broadband and mobile Internet access continue to grow steadily. The Index can be used to inform and enrich policy-making through benchmarking and analysis of performance. It can be used for comparisons within regions, within countries, and also to analyse the experience of different groups within society in sharing in an inclusive Information Society.

The Report also highlights some of the important implementation that is underway in support of the commitments made during the Summit and recognises the valuable work being carried out in different parts of the world. It is my hope that this Report will focus attention and maintain the momentum of WSIS, as we work together to fulfill the pledge we made at the World Summit – a pledge to turn the digital divide into digital opportunity for all.



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