

[Draft Plan of Action

(Based on WSIS03/PCIP/DT/5 refined through the WSIS inter-sessional mechanism)

[Note: The whole document is in square brackets]

A) Introduction

1. *The Declaration of Principles can be translated into concrete actions by promoting the use of ICT-based products, networks, services and applications in order to create a measurable impact on societal development, and achieve development goals.¹*

2. Governments, the private sector, civil society, the media and multilateral organizations all have a role in the evolution towards an Information Society, supported by ICTs and traditional communication media.

3. **Governments** have a fundamental role in developing and implementing comprehensive, forward-looking and sustainable e-strategies, adapted to the specific requirements of different communities and reflecting the stage of development and the structural characteristics of the national economy *and society*. Such strategies should include:

- a) Establishing regulatory frameworks *to achieve universal access and affordable services*, to improve national legislation, explore innovative ways to correct market failures and foster innovative approaches, including competition, to bring the Information Society to all sectors of the economy and society, especially those living in poverty.
- b) Renewing models for public sector action and actively shaping the transformation towards an Information Society.
- c) Preparing the future generation for the Information Society, and creating an environment of continuous learning.
- d) Ensuring the effective participation of all stakeholders in the e-strategies that are elaborated.
- e) Becoming model users of new technologies and ICTs to improve the quality and delivery of government services.

National government and local authorities must prioritize and promote local ICT initiatives to serve local, national and regional communities.

4. The commitment of **the private sector** is crucial for a sustainable development of infrastructures, content and applications. The private sector should play an important role in the development and diffusion of ICTs.

¹ Text originally coming from observers is shown in *italics* in this draft.

- a) The private sector is not only a market player but also plays a role in a wider political and social context, for example helping countries to develop ICTs and overcome the digital divide.
- b) The private sector can be involved in practical partnerships for innovative applications, for instance, in e-government initiatives.
- c) The private sector remains responsible and accountable for fair, open and transparent practices.

5. The commitment of **civil society** is crucial for creating an equitable Information Society based on sustainable social and economic development and gender equality. Civil society, including NGOs, should work closely with communities in strengthening ICT-related initiatives. They should be fully involved in the formulation and implementation of ICTs and sustainable development strategies:

- a) Civil society involvement is vital in the take-up and social acceptance of the Information Society.
- b) *Civil Society has a key role in the creation and development of content in the Information Society.*
- c) Civil society can help to strengthen the value aspect in the triangle of regulation, markets and values, *and to provide a critical perspective.*

6. **The media**—in their various forms, *and with a diversity of ownership*—are recognized as an essential requirement for freedom of expression and a guarantee of the plurality of information:

- a) The media provide an important means of disseminating public information, and fostering social development and cohesion.
- b) *Public service broadcasting and community media have specific and crucial roles to play in ensuring the participation of all in the Information Society.*

7. **Multilateral organizations** have a key role in providing guidance, facilitating peer dialogue, exchange of experience and familiarization with good practices, offering technical assistance in the design of national *and regional* e-Strategies, *and in measuring their impact.*

- a) International and regional organizations, including financial and development institutions should assist developing countries in integrating the use of ICTs in the development process and making available the necessary resources.
- b) They should assess and report regularly on progress towards the Information Society.
- c) They should also ensure non-discrimination—whether based on sex, race, age, language, ethnicity, culture, religion, or disability—for all members in their programmes, projects and contractual engagements, with the aim of creating equitable opportunities for the growth of ICT sectors of developing countries.
- d) *All organizations should contribute in their respective areas of competence and expertise.*

B) Objectives, goals and targets

8. Achievement of the objectives and goals of the World Summit on the Information Society requires a phased implementation. The first phase would be reached when all localities in the world have a minimal technological infrastructure. The second phase would conclude when there is content and infrastructure to address different social services such as education and health. The third phase would be met when all communities have access to and benefit from ICTs.²

9. At a global level, the following **indicative targets** could serve as benchmarks for actions to be taken for improving access to, and use of, ICTs. They could also be used for developing more specific targets in national e-strategies:

- a) All villages to be connected by 2010, with a community access point by 2015.
- b) 90 per cent of the world's population to be within wireless coverage by 2010 and 100 per cent by 2015.
- c) All universities to be connected by 2005, all secondary schools by 2010 and all primary schools by 2015.

² Text proposed during the WSIS bureau meeting of 22 August 2003.

- d) *All scientific research centres to be connected by 2005.*
- e) *All public libraries to be connected by 2006 and all cultural centres, museums and archives by 2010.*
- f) *All hospitals to be connected by 2005, and health centres by 2010.*
- g) *All central governments departments to have a website and email address by 2005 and all local governments departments by 2010.*
- h) *All primary and secondary school curricula to be revised to meet the challenges of the Information Society by 2006.*
- i) *All of the world's population to have access to domestic radio services by 2010 and domestic TV services by 2015.*
- j) *The necessary technical conditions should be in place by 2010 to permit all world languages to be present and used on the Internet.*
- k) *Building awareness of the use of ICTs to all segments of society by 2020.*

10. The Information Society must serve the interests of all nations and all the people of the world, in a manner that secures their fair, balanced and harmonious development. This will require specific actions to assist the most **vulnerable communities and countries**:

Actions	Level ³
a) Establishing an international fund to finance the initiation, study and implementation of ICT projects in rural areas, particularly in the Least Developed Countries (LDCs), within three years (2006).	I
b) Establishing, particularly in the LDCs, multipurpose access points in order to provide a wide range of e-services/applications in rural areas.	R, I
c) Identifying the cooperation arrangements, offered by the international financial institutions, which afford the LDCs an opportunity to create the infrastructure they need to be able to ensure their access to ICTs.	I
d) Considering appropriate measures to assist LDCs facing high connectivity costs, including by facilitating traffic aggregation.	I
e) Setting up, within three years, distance training centres in the LDCs.	R, I

C) Action Lines

1. Information and communication infrastructure

11. *Advances in ICTs provide all communities and social groups with unique opportunities to enhance access to, and participation in, the Information Society. Infrastructure is central to this goal of digital inclusion, enabling universal, sustainable, ubiquitous and affordable access to ICTs by all. This will require utilizing existing and new technologies. It will be necessary to:*

Actions	Level
a) Study relevant solutions for promoting the development of information and communication infrastructures adapted to the environment, <i>and relevant to communities</i> , with particular attention to the needs of remote and rural areas, and marginalized urban areas.	N, R, I
b) Produce a yearly inventory of the best technologies for access to remote and rural areas in order to optimize ICT access costs.	R, I
c) Improve connectivity for institutions accessible to the public, such as schools, universities, libraries, post offices, community centres, museums, etc.	N
d) Undertake international research and development efforts aimed at making available adequate Internet community access equipment for under US\$ 100 by 2010, and under US\$ 50 by 2015.	N, R, I
e) Utilize unused satellite capacity to improve low-cost connectivity in developing countries.	R, I
f) Develop and strengthen national, regional and international broadband network infrastructure to help in providing the capacity to match the needs of countries and their citizens and for the delivery of new services.	N, R, I

³ Note: N = National; R = Regional; I = International.

g) Reinvigorate the project for the modernization and extension of the existing PANAFTTEL network and remove all obstacles to the implementation of the RASCOM (Regional African Satellite Communications Organization) project.	R
h) Provide all interested countries with appropriate technical assistance for the preparation of network development plans for broadband, Internet and IP.	N, R, I
i) <i>Put in place plans for a transition to digital TV in all countries by 2010.</i>	N
j) <i>Mobilize financial, scientific, business and citizenry commitment to the development of alternative, renewable energy sources adapted to the environment for ICTs.</i>	N, R, I

12. Universal access policies should promote the best possible level of connectivity at an affordable and reasonable cost for all. Pro-active government policies to ensure Universal Access need to be defined and implemented in a transparent manner and in cooperation with private sector and civil society. They could take the form of a mechanism based on national funds to finance Universal Access, financed according to the principle of solidarity, i.e. on the basis of levied fees or taxes. The funds can be used for the development of isolated or disadvantaged regions whenever the universal access obligation appears to be unprofitable. Any such policy should not infringe on the principle of awarding licences to private operators, of free competition and of non-discrimination. Actions to be taken could include:

Actions	Level
a) Devise, for all interested countries, appropriate universal access policies and strategies within two years (2005).	N, I
b) <i>Undertake a global programme with the objective of providing sustainable connectivity to every village and community and especially to excluded populations of developing countries, with particular emphasis on the LDCs and Small Island Developing States. It would be conducted under the guidance of the competent national authorities and in partnership with the private sector and civil society, using the most appropriate and affordable technologies.</i>	I
c) Include universal access policies into national e-Strategies, improving adaptation to local needs and conditions, increasing support for project planning and development and improving networking between projects and experience-sharing.	N
d) Revise the concept of universal access to reflect advances and opportunities offered by new technology, market development and changes in user demand.	N, R, I
e) Launch, through ITU, technical, regulatory and operational studies with a view to promoting the provision of high-speed satellite services for underserved areas.	I

13. Technological convergence should be monitored with a view to integrating ICTs in order to create alternative forms of access that can help to narrow the digital divide.

Actions	Level
a) Further research and launch projects, at local and regional level, on alternative ways to organize the deployment, management and operation of communication systems (i.e. convergence and operator-neutral access networks).	N, R
b) Optimize connectivity among major information networks through the creation of regional traffic hubs, to reduce interconnection costs and broaden network access.	R
c) Develop methodologies for more equitable sharing of Internet transit and interconnection costs, thereby contributing to reducing the price of connectivity to end-users in developing countries, facilitating the universalization of access.	R, I
d) Develop national and regional ICT backbones and Internet Exchange Points.	N, R
e) <i>Promote and implement the creation of Internet Exchange Points within and between African countries.</i>	R
f) Establish guidelines for Internet traffic contracts and, where necessary, renegotiate existing ones, in accordance with the legal provisions of each country, so as to allow more equitable access for all countries.	N, R
g) <i>Promote joint use of traditional media and new technologies.</i>	N, R, I

14. In order to overcome the obstacles, which are often created by new technologies, and to ensure the **inclusion of vulnerable groups** in the Information Society, the following actions are envisaged:

Actions	Level
a) Design information and communication equipment so that everyone, including the elderly and disabled, can easily access it.	N, R, I
b) <i>Address the special needs of the disabled, the elderly, indigenous people and migrants by promoting the development of technologies, applications, and content suited to their needs.</i>	N, R, I
c) Designate, by 2005, a top-level delegate in national governing/regulation bodies for telecommunication and information technology, to be assigned to maintain regular contact with the organizations of the disabled, especially with	N

organizations of the deaf and the blind, and to make sure that the special requirements for the disabled are recognized and implemented in national laws and regulations.	
d) Establish, in all countries, telephone relay systems, to be in operation for text communication systems not later than 2005, and for video communication systems not later than 2010. A telephone relay service should be considered as part of the universal service, which enables live communications around the clock between hearing people and deaf people/hearing-impaired people/people with speech problems.	N
e) Television stations should take into account the information requirements of deaf and hearing-impaired people in that an appropriate proportion of their programmes are subtitled or signed.	N
f) <i>Develop low-cost technologies and non-text based computer interfaces using iconographic software and voice recognition (vocal and tactile e-applications) to facilitate ICT access</i> to a large part of the population in developing countries.	N, R, I

2. Access to information and knowledge

15. *At the heart of the digital revolution is the power of ICTs to allow people to access information and knowledge almost instantaneously, anywhere in the world, and to help meet their aspiration for a better life. Individuals, organizations and communities should benefit from unhindered access to knowledge and information. Information in the **public domain** should be of high quality and easily accessible for all, without distinction. It will be necessary to:*

Actions	Level
a) Develop policy guidelines for the development and promotion of public domain information as an important international instrument promoting public access to information.	N, R, I
b) Promote the accessibility of public information through the harmonization of procurement policies.	N, R, I
c) Governments should provide free access on the Internet to information of a public nature. They should establish legislation on access to information and the protection of public data, notably in the area of the new technologies, and publish it on the home page of their website.	N
d) <i>Governments should adopt electronic freedom of information acts and publish all public information on websites and should develop appropriate legislation and implementation measures ensuring access by citizens to public information on an equal basis, with due regard for protecting privacy.</i>	N
e) <i>Establish a programme, funded by the UN (or its agencies), to create a worldwide portal to open access journals and books, and an open archive for scientific information.</i>	I

16. All stakeholders should support the diverse network of existing **libraries and archives** and should support those countries that plan to develop their own. Information and records management is a necessary condition for good governance. A modest level of investment in new technology, training and above all, content provision could kick-start the information revolution in many regions by broadening access and developing skills:

Actions	Level
a) Governments should establish multi-purpose community public access points, providing affordable or free-of-charge access for their citizens to the Internet, and possessing sufficient capacity to provide assistance to users, in libraries, educational institutions, public administrations or other public places.	N
b) Governments must ensure proper organization, appropriate classification and financially-assured archiving of their own documents in order to guarantee long-term transparency and access to public information and records.	N
c) Creation and development of a public library service, adapted to the digital era should be supported.	N
d) Governments should provide appropriate training for archives users, staff and future staff and promote policies that increase public awareness of archives and records.	N

17. Development and deployment of **open-source** software, multi-platform and open platforms, should be encouraged to provide freedom of choice and to facilitate access to ICTs by all citizens, at an affordable cost:

Actions	Level
a) <i>Create awareness of open-source/free software, especially in the developing countries.</i>	N, R, I
b) <i>A "Programmers Without Frontiers" initiative, focused on open-source/free software as applied to development needs, should be launched and coordinated, under the auspices of the UN.</i>	I
c) Intensify standardization efforts in the field of terminology and other language resources.	R, I

d) <i>Promote a collaborative network of open-source/free software technology tools for civil society.</i>	N, R, I
e) <i>Create intellectual property mechanisms that protect and encourage the use of open source technologies and development processes. In addition, it would provide mechanisms that ensure that public interests are taken into account when community informatics processes involve the private sector.</i>	N, I
f) <i>Finance the development of open source technologies and open software that will facilitate women's access.</i>	N, I
g) Governments should encourage research on the advantages and disadvantages of open source software, in particular on its use by government agencies. Results of this research should be made available by 2005.	N

3. The role of governments, the business sector and civil society and UN and other public international organizations in the promotion of ICTs for development

18. The full and effective involvement of all stakeholders, and the mobilization of resources, is vital in developing the Information Society (see Section D). Increased **cooperation and partnership** between stakeholders are needed for the effective design and implementation of initiatives related to the Information Society. Action should therefore be taken to:

Actions	Level
a) Instruct international organizations to mainstream ICTs in their work programmes and to assist developing countries to prepare action plans to support the fulfilment of the goals indicated in the declaration of principles and in this plan of action.	I
b) By 2005, relevant multilateral organizations should develop their own strategies for the use of ICTs for sustainable development and as an effective instrument to help achieve the goals expressed in the UN Millennium Declaration.	I
c) Establish, under the aegis of ITU, a mechanism for the coordination of measures and activities carried out by international bodies in order to facilitate the promotion and development of the Information Society.	I
d) Establish, by 2005, a structured multi-stakeholder dialogue involving all relevant actors, to be responsible for devising e-strategies for the achievement of the Information Society and for supervising their implementation.	N
e) National e-strategies, including the necessary human capacity-building, should be developed for all countries within three years <i>to fully embrace the Information Society</i> , taking into account the differences among countries (2006).	N
f) Identify a mechanism for the promotion and monitoring of partnerships between stakeholders of the Information Society.	N
g) New and innovative forms of partnerships at all levels and between all stakeholders, such as Public Private Partnerships (PPPs), will be a key ingredient in the successful implementation of the plan of action. Each country should establish at least one successful PPP by 2005 as a showcase for future action.	N
h) Encourage a series of related measures, including among other things: incubator schemes, venture capital investments (local and international), government investment funds (including micro finance for SMEs), investment promotion strategies, software export support activities (trade counseling), support of research and development networks and software parks.	N

4. Capacity building

19. An ambitious and innovative approach is required in human capacity building, taking advantage of the opportunities offered by **ICTs in education**. For the whole range of educational activities, the use of ICTs could contribute to more efficiency and better quality in education services.

Actions	Level
a) <i>Ensure that ICTs are fully integrated in education at all levels, including in curriculum development, teacher training, institutional administration and management.</i> In particular, curricula at the primary and secondary levels should be revised to incorporate appropriate ICT training, to ensure adequate e-literacy for all attending these levels and preparing them to meet the challenges of the Information Society. Adequate training of teachers and sufficient resources to schools to integrate ICTs in educational programmes should be provided.	N
b) Design and implement regional and international cooperation activities (e.g. meetings for policy design, training seminars, establishment of cooperative networks, demonstrations, exchange of best practices) to enhance the capacity of leaders and operational staff in developing countries, including LDC, to apply ICTs effectively in the whole range of educational activities. This should include delivery of education outside the educational structure, such as the workplace and at home. <i>The impact of ICT-based alternative educational delivery systems, notably for achieving Education for All targets, should be demonstrated through pilot projects.</i>	R, I
c) Develop affordable solutions in terms of hardware and software that meet the needs of all educational levels and which are suited to local conditions, while promoting the combination of various media, both traditional and new.	N, R

d) Design special programmes using ICTs to increase knowledge of ICT among girls and women, and to remove the gender barriers (including unequal access to education). <i>Awareness-raising programmes should be developed to sensitize decision-makers and policy-makers on this issue, as well as teacher training courses for implementation. Early intervention programmes in science and technology should target young girls to increase the number of women in ICT careers.</i>	N
e) Develop distance training through subregional, regional and global cooperation programmes, including by pooling available resources.	N, R, I
f) <i>Launch pilot projects to design new forms of ICT-based networking, in particular education and research networks linking developed and developing countries, and networks between teachers and teachers' institutions.</i>	N

20. ICT literacy and skills levels should be enhanced to ensure the best use of the Information Society:

Actions	Level
a) Design and implement leaders' awareness and training programmes and draw-up guidelines to establish e-strategies at the national level.	N
b) Design specific training programmes in the use of ICTs and revise curricula for content workers such as archivists, librarians, scientists, teachers, journalists and other media workers.	N
c) Design and offer e-literacy courses <i>to empower local communities in ICT use and</i> to ensure the production of useful and socially meaningful content for the benefit of all.	N
d) <i>Promote e-literacy courses for civil servants.</i>	N, R, I
e) Establish local ICT training centres with the cooperation of all stakeholders.	N
f) <i>Ensure equal training opportunities in media and ICT related fields for women and girls.</i>	N
g) Ensure that young people are equipped with knowledge and skills to use ICTs and to participate fully in the Information Society, <i>including to select and interpret scientific information.</i>	N
h) <i>Activate volunteer programmes (including UNV) to provide ICT training in developing countries, more particularly for marginalized groups or for specific applications.</i>	N, R, I
i) <i>Promote lifelong learning in the ICT field as well as private sector investment in ICT education and training.</i>	N
j) <i>Foster the development of internationally compatible descriptors and standards for distance and e-learning courseware and for e-learning institutions.</i>	I

21. Basic and advanced education should be improved and made more accessible to help create a critical mass of **highly-qualified and skilled ICT professionals and experts, ensuring equal access for women and girls in the ICT field:**

Actions	Level
a) Create, at the national level, a critical mass of qualified and skilled ICT professionals and experts.	N
b) Train ICT specialists to ensure the availability of efficient, reliable, competitive and secure ICT networks services.	N
c) Create an adequate environment (e.g. training and employment opportunities, teleworking) to prevent South to North brain-drain.	N, I

5. Building confidence, trust and security in the use of ICTs

22. The **security of networks is one of the critical issues for the use of the new technologies in general but especially for the continued growth of electronic commerce. Security, authentication, privacy and consumer protection are prerequisites for a mature Information Society and for building confidence among all users of ICTs. Effective **information security** could be guaranteed not only by technology, but also by education and training, policy and law, and international co-operation. It will be necessary to:**

Actions	Level
a) Take steps to enhance security, user confidence and other aspects of information and system/network integrity in order to avoid the systematic risk of disruption and destruction of the network systems on which we are all increasingly dependent.	N, R, I
b) Develop a baseline of computer security safeguards that all stakeholders must adopt in order to protect their computer infrastructure (computer pirates and viruses on the Internet).	N, R, I
c) Support the development of security schemes that balance security measures with the individual's right to privacy, respecting the UN Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and draw upon the principles of existing Guidelines and Convention in various forums, such as the OECD guidelines for the Security of Information Systems and Networks.	N, R, I

d) Put in place special mechanisms to encourage the banking sector to develop secure and reliable applications to facilitate online transactions.	N, R, I
e) Develop a framework for the implementation of electronic signatures.	N, R, I

23. In the long term a “**global culture of cyber-security**” should be developed, with due respect to human rights, freedom of expression and privacy. It will be necessary to:

Actions	Level
a) Invite each country to set up a focal point for real-time security incident handling and response, and develop an open co-operative network between these focal points for sharing information and technologies on incident response.	N, R, I
b) A global investigation on the impact of ICT security policies on civil liberties and human rights should be initiated under the supervision of the UN. The assessment would cover threats to privacy, freedom of expression, freedom from surveillance, etc. A public benchmarking on the evolution of this impact would be provided by a dedicated mechanism.	I

24. Protection from civil and criminal offences (“**cybercrime**”) is essential in order to build trust in information networks:

Actions	Level
a) Governments, in cooperation with the private sector, should adopt a specific common policy against the global threat of crimes committed using information technology (cybercrime) through legislation and international co-operation. The Council of Europe’s Convention on Cybercrime lays down balanced standards and creates a cooperation process open to all states.	N, R, I
b) Cooperation mechanisms should be established at the national, regional and international levels to fight against paedophilia and pornography on the Internet, strengthening coalition of forces, involving children, industry, policy-makers, educators and parents to ensure that users are aware of potential dangers and have available to them the necessary means to combat these threats.	N, R, I

6. Enabling environment

25. To maximize the economic and social benefits of the Information Society, governments need to create a trustworthy, transparent, and non-discriminatory **legal, regulatory and policy environment**, capable of promoting technological innovation and competition, and to provide appropriate incentives to favour the necessary investments in the deployment of infrastructures and development of new services and content. To this end, the following actions will be necessary to:

Actions	Level
a) Formulate and implement effective strategies for the expansion and development of ICTs at national, regional and international levels.	N, R, I
b) Support the development of ICT policies, strategies and legislation by providing technical assistance, making available international best practices and creating a network among government institutions.	N, R, I
c) Encourage all countries to join the international trade agreement(s) on basic telecommunication services.	I
d) Remove duties levied on ICT hardware and software.	N, I
e) Promote and mainstream a principle of non-discrimination and equal opportunity in national, regional and international ICT regulation.	N, R, I
f) Establish an effective dispute settlement system: alternative dispute resolution (ADR) should be considered to secure prompt settlement of dispute.	N, R, I
g) Encourage a positive general business environment for entrepreneurs and investors by removing administrative obstacles, adjusting tax and legal systems, minimizing bureaucracy and fighting corruption, promoting transparency etc.	N
h) Implement appropriate policies to support the development of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) in the ICT sector.	N
i) Take effective measures to combat paedophilia, racism, racial discrimination and xenophobia on the Internet.	N, R, I
j) Promote effective participation by developing countries in international ICT decision-making forums and create opportunities for exchange of experience.	N, R, I
k) Create new forums, and strengthen existing ones, for the exchange of experience, along the lines of the ITU Global Symposium for Regulators.	R, I
l) Encourage the diffusion and promotion of the next-generation technologies such as IPv6, mobile internet and broadband satellite communication.	N, R, I

26. Information Society stakeholders should seek to promote the development and deployment of open, flexible and interoperable **international standards** for ICT networking, and the creation and dissemination of content and network services to ensure that all can utilize the technology and associated content and services to their maximum potential. It will be necessary to:

Actions	Level
a) Raise awareness of the importance of international interoperability standards for global e-commerce, and the feasibility of establishing a flexible and open global standards framework.	N, R, I
b) Promote interoperability principles and metadata standards to facilitate cooperation and effective and efficient use of collected data and information.	N, R, I
c) <i>The International Organization for Standardization/International Electrotechnical Commission (ISO/IEC) and other relevant bodies should be encouraged to develop adaptations of existing systems analysis and software engineering standards, such as the ISO/IEC 12207 life cycle standard, tailored to the unique needs of developing ICT-based solutions for communities.</i>	I

27. The **radio frequency spectrum** should be managed in the public and general interest and in accordance with the basic principle of legality, with full observance of national laws and regulations and as well as relevant international agreements:

Actions	Level
a) Governments should support a generous allocation of frequencies for local radio stations at reasonable prices. A transmitter network concept should be used which takes into account the federal, pluralist, democratic and cultural requirements of each country.	N

28. The loss of **privacy, illegal and harmful content and the protection of minors** raise real consumer fears. Assurance of the confidentiality of personal information is essential in building the Information Society. In addition, policies and codes to address unsolicited electronic communications (“spam”) are necessary.

Actions	Level
a) <i>Governments should actively promote user education and awareness about online privacy and the means of protecting privacy (such as the implementation of opt-in policy, the creation of independent commission and the development of alternative online dispute resolution service), and enact comprehensive laws protecting personal data in both the public and private sectors, giving individuals clear rights to control the collection, use and disclosure of their personal information, and an effective means of exercising those rights.</i>	N
b) <i>Governments should adopt an international convention on the protection of personal data and privacy. Existing legal instruments, based on the Council of Europe treaty #108 and the EU Data Protection Directive, should be the basis.</i>	I
c) Establish a clearinghouse for the exchange of information and to promote cooperation among groups concerned with child abuse.	R, I
d) Establish an international legal framework to prohibit producing and circulating pornographic contents and harmful materials throughout the Internet, under the auspices of UNESCO.	I
e) Disseminate information among researchers, and promote exchange of information among child care and child protection organizations, Internet Service Providers (ISPs), Web masters, police and judicial institutions, media practitioners, citizens and civic groups and other concerned groups.	N
f) Take action to ensure consumer protection in e-commerce transactions, notably through the fight against unsolicited electronic communications, detection of illegal contents, transparency of e-transactions, security of e-payments and contracts, efficient access to adapted resources, enhanced international co-operation and harmonization of local regulations.	N
g) Examine options to help treat the problem of spam, such as a holistic approach to restrict the activities of spammers and to minimize the damage they do, whilst still accommodating legitimate and responsible direct marketing activities. This will involve ISPs playing their part, both in educating their users and in dealing with spammers and spamming activity. Countries need to cooperate to help detect, prosecute or deter international scams using spam. More work is necessary to counter the problem, requiring broad international commitment, cooperation and resources.	N, R, I
h) Laws facilitating electronic commerce should always permit consumers to reject the use of electronic communication, and should protect consumers from unreasonable reliance by businesses on such mode of communication.	N
i) <i>Governments should update their domestic consumer protection laws and procedural rules so as to address new problems raised by the use of ICTs, in particular electronic commerce, in a way that provides consumers with at least the same level of protection online as they enjoy offline.</i>	N

29. *It is necessary to broaden the participation of all stakeholders in the governance of the Information Society. Internet governance should be multilateral and transparent, taking into account the needs of the public and private sectors, as well as those of civil society and multilingualism. An international/intergovernmental organization should ensure multilateral, democratic and transparent management of root servers, domain names and Internet Protocol address assignment.*

Actions	Level
a) In co-operation with the relevant stakeholders, and respecting the sovereignty of States, governments should work to internationalize the management of Internet resources in order to achieve a universally representative solution.	I
b) Foster international dialogue among all interested parties (governments, private sector, civil society and relevant organizations) in order to ensure the most appropriate management structure. The second phase of WSIS in Tunis should review the outcome of this dialogue.	N, R, I

30. *It is necessary to protect the rights of creators, notably through international cooperation, always ensuring a fair balance between the rights of the intellectual property owners and those of users of information, taking into account the global consensus achieved on IPR issues in multilateral organizations.*

Actions	Level
a) Ensure that any legal regime on database protection guarantees full and open access to data created with public funding. Restriction on proprietary data should also be designed so as to maximize availability for academic research and teaching purposes.	N, I
b) Strengthen protection against unfair use of indigenous knowledge.	N, I

7. ICT Applications

31. *ICTs applications can support social and economic development, in particular in the fields of public administration, business, education, health, employment, environment, agriculture and science, including on broadband networks. It is also important to ensure that traditional models are recognized and respected, so that non-users of ICTs are not marginalized. Growth in the demand for these applications will help create a favourable environment for the private sector to invest in the development of new goods and services. The following examples are intended to illustrate the potential for this:*

32. E-government:

Actions	Level
a) Policy guidelines on e-governance at local, national and regional levels should be developed by 2005.	N, R
b) Support, at the international level, co-operation initiatives in the field of e-Government for development in order to enhance transparency, accountability and efficiency—at all levels of government, and in particular at the local level—more specifically: coordination of intergovernmental operations, delivery of public services, design of online services, including online access to legislation, adapted to the needs of citizens and businesses and better management of financial, human and public resources and goods.	I
c) <i>ICTs for good governance should be promoted, especially in, secure voting procedures from remote polling stations, transparent public finance management, decentralization of administrative systems and greater co-operation between public and private sectors.</i>	N
d) <i>Governments should provide human capacity-building and training services to small enterprises and content providers, focused on the implementation of guidelines and best practices for consumer protection online.</i>	N

33. E-business:

Actions	Level
a) International organizations, supported by both the public and the private sector, should promote the benefits of international trade and the use of e-business.	I
b) Through the adoption of an enabling environment, and based on widely available Internet access and a broadband infrastructure, Governments should seek to stimulate private investment, new applications, content development and to foster public/private partnerships.	N
c) E-business and e-commerce should be used to contribute towards the development of micro-enterprises and SMEs, which have a very important social function in job creation, especially in developing countries.	N

34. E-learning (see also section C4):

Actions	Level
a) E-learning should contribute to achieving universal primary education worldwide, through better delivery of education and better training of teachers, and offering improved conditions for lifelong learning, encompassing people that are outside the "normal" education process, and improving professional skills.	N, I
b) Take advantage of best practices to create high-quality, gender-sensitive and readily accessible teaching material from all over the world to facilitate knowledge <i>appropriation</i> at the national level.	N, R, I

35. E-health:

Actions	Level
a) Devise innovative solutions and options for providing health services to underserved areas and to provide e-health support for specific groups (such as the elderly, the chronically ill and children).	N, R, I
b) Encourage the development of institutional partnerships, <i>with the participation of intergovernmental and multilateral organizations</i> , and the creation of health care network between health care institutions in developing and developed countries, notably by setting up databases and interactive portals.	R, I
c) <i>Prepare and disseminate accessible information that strengthens prevention programmes and promotes women's health, such as education and information on sexual and reproductive health issues and on sexually transmitted disease and HIV/AIDS.</i>	N
d) Establish an ICT-based e-health network to provide medical assistance following humanitarian disaster and emergencies.	R, I
e) Governments should undertake to adapt their legislation and standards with a view to making electronic clinical files valid in law. All individuals <i>that choose to do so</i> should have a single electronic clinical record covering their entire lives, from birth to death. Governments should also pursue the adoption of a global technical standard for the exchange of data between the information systems of all public and private health institutions.	N

36. E-employment:

Actions	Level
a) Develop, at the international levels, best practices and new labour laws for e-workers and e-employers built on principles of social justice and gender equality. The role of the ILO is fundamental in this respect.	I
b) Promote new ways of organizing work and business with the aim of raising productivity, growth and well-being through investment in information and communication technologies and human resources.	N, R, I
c) Promote teleworking to allow the best brains of the developing world to live in their societies and work anywhere, and to increase women's employment opportunities	N, R, I

37. E-environment:

Actions	Level
a) <i>Mobilize ICTs in order to meet the specific needs of small islands under an environment endangered by hazards or global warming.</i>	N, R, I
b) Establish systems, using ICTs, to forecast natural disasters, to monitor environmental impact and to prevent man-made disasters.	N, R, I
c) Governments and the private sector should develop different instruments that can help to extract the maximum environmental benefits from ICTs and speed the development of sustainability solutions throughout society. These instruments should be ready for implementation by 2005.	N
d) Government and the business community should initiate actions and implement projects and programmes for the environmentally safe disposal and recycling of discarded ICT hardware and parts.	N, R, I

38. E-agriculture:

Actions	Level
a) <i>Establish partnerships between institutions for the systematic exchange of information on agriculture, fisheries, forestry and food, according to agreed procedures and standards, in order to provide policy makers, policy advisers, researchers and the public, ready access to comprehensive, up-to-date and detailed knowledge and information.</i>	R, I

39. E-science:

Actions	Level
a) <i>Promote the use of peer-to-peer technology to share personal scientific knowledge and pre-prints and reprints</i>	N, R, I

<i>written by scientific authors who have waived their right to payment.</i>	
b) <i>Provide long-term support for the systematic and efficient collection, preservation and provision of essential digital data, e.g. population and meteorological data, in all countries.</i>	N, R, I
c) <i>Promote appropriate open source initiatives to make scientific information affordable and accessible on an equitable basis in all countries.</i>	I

8. Cultural identity and linguistic diversity, local content and media development

40. Cultural and linguistic diversity enriches the development of society by giving expression to a wide range of different values and ideas. It is a prerequisite for sustainable development.

Actions	Level
a) In conformity with UNESCO's Universal Declaration and Action Plan on Cultural Diversity, governments should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Create cultural policies with a legal framework and, where necessary, financial support for the protection, promotion and enhancement of cultural diversity and cultural heritage within Information Society. This includes safeguarding the cultural heritage as a common trust, keeping it accessible as a living part of today's culture and developing standards for its preservation, enhancement, and exploitation, making full use of the potential of ICTs. ii. Develop and implement policies that preserve and promote diversity of cultural expression and indigenous knowledge and traditions through the creation of varied information content and the digitization of the educational, scientific and cultural heritage. 	N, I
b) Governments, through public/private partnerships, should promote technologies and R&D programmes in the areas of translation, iconographies, voice-assisted services and the development of necessary hardware and software, such as standard character sets, language codes, electronic dictionaries, terminology and thesauri, multilingual search engines, machine translation tools, <i>multilingual domain names</i> , content referencing as well as general and application software. This will permit: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. all the world's languages to be present and used on the Internet; ii. all different cultures to mix with each other in the information societies; iii. the development of national and community cultural identities; iv. multilingualism in cyberspace as well as in all other forms of media and communication systems; v. respect of the different language communities in the development of international standards; vi. processing information in local languages; vii. <i>enabling indigenous peoples to utilize new tools in the Information Society, if desired, in their cultural production and community development;</i> viii. preserving non written and other endangered languages; ix. developing information and applications in the language and cultural context most familiar to the user, thereby further encouraging the use of ICTs; and x. developing multilingual applications for use in enterprise and administration. 	N, R, I
c) All citizens should be provided access to radio and television services, the content of which meets their need for content that is relevant to their own cultures and languages, in accordance with the law of each country.	N, R
d) <i>Governments should support the use of ICTs in cultural industries in developing countries, the international exchange of cultural goods and services through the development of endogenous cultural industries, the use of ICTs for exhibitions and for promoting and marketing cultural works as well as the private sector's contribution to enhancing cultural diversity in the Information Society.</i>	N
e) <i>Provide significant support and backing for the implementation of the ICT programme of the African Academy of Languages.</i>	R

41. Local content in a variety of languages is indispensable in achieving sustainable development. Traditional media and ICTs should be developed and used so as to contribute to those goals:

Actions	Level
a) Through public/private partnerships, foster the creation of varied local and national information content, available in the mother tongue of users, thereby helping to preserve and disseminate local and national culture, language and heritage, and to safeguard family and community cohesion.	N
b) Nurture the local capacity for developing hardware, software, literacy software in local languages, as well as content that is relevant to different segments of population, including non-literate, especially in developing countries and countries whose economy is in transition.	N

c) As the first level of contact between administrations and their citizens, local authorities should support local content development, digital archives, diverse forms of digital media, content translation and adaptation. Those activities can also foster the development of local communities.	N
d) Develop national policies and laws to ensure that libraries, archives, museums and other cultural institutions can play their full role of content—including traditional knowledge—providers in the information society, more particularly by providing continued access to recorded information.	N
e) <i>Develop an international framework for the preservation of digital heritage, including developing systems for ensuring continued access to archived digital information and multimedia content, and support archives and libraries as the memory of humankind.</i>	I
f) <i>Give recognition and support to media based in local communities and support projects combining the use of traditional media and new technologies for their role in facilitating the use of local languages, for documenting and preserving local heritage and as a privileged means to reach rural and isolated communities.</i>	N
g) <i>Develop ICT-based information systems in local languages and accessible media formats, based on research into women's stated information needs, with relevant content for women to increase their economic opportunities and entrepreneurship skills, including information about national economic and trade policies and programmes</i>	N
h) <i>Strengthen programmes focused on gender-sensitive curricula in formal and non-formal education for all and enhancing communication and media literacy for women so as to build the capacity of girls and women to develop ICT content.</i>	N

8a) Media

42. The **media** play a key role in the Information Society. As the same basic principles apply to both traditional and new media using ICT, policy formulation and concrete support should ensure that they are provided an adequate environment for this purpose:

Actions	Level
a) Governments should preserve or develop legislation that guarantees the independence and plurality of the media and to transform the state media (radio, TV and other) into public services that enjoy editorial independence. Governments should take legal measures limiting the concentration of the media, so as to guarantee diversified, pluralistic information sources.	N
b) The media should adapt to other more recent forms of content delivery the standards applicable to the broadcast media, including the separation of editorial content and advertising, the protection of minors against illegal and harmful content, and the prohibition of certain types of advertising.	N, R, I
c) States should take clear measures to ensure that the international standards on working conditions and the right of workers to organize and be represented are applied in all the media, old and new.	N, I
d) Media professionals (employers and employees) should commit themselves to establish partnerships with the media in disadvantaged regions or societies. This can be done, for example, by establishing twinning relationships between editorial staff, developing exchanges of personnel, encouraging the development of citizens' associations of listeners/viewers/surfers for conducting a critical dialogue with their media, and supporting, the professional training of journalists, in the form of courses and seminars, in using ICTs and in adapting their role to a changed environment with increased competition from non-professional information providers.	N, R, I
e) Encourage investment in regional and community-based media content as well as new technologies.	N, R
f) <i>Launch specific projects that promote balanced and diverse portrayals of women by the media and international communication systems and that promote increased participation by women and men in production and decision-making.</i>	N, R, I
g) <i>Take effective measures—to the extent consistent with freedom of expression—to combat the growing sexualization and use of pornography in media content, in terms of the rapid development of ICTs; to encourage the media to refrain from presenting women as inferior beings and exploiting them as sexual objects and commodities; to combat ICT and media-based violence against women including criminal misuse of ICT for sexual harassment, sexual exploitation and trafficking in women and girls; and to support the development and use of ICT as a resource for the empowerment of women and girls, including those affected by violence, abuse and other forms of sexual exploitation.</i>	N, R, I

9. Ethical dimensions of the Information Society

43. *An emphasis should be placed on the formulation of legislation and policies and the definition of ethical and moral orientations required for the development of human life in a sound society.*

Actions	Level
a) <i>Create a review and monitoring body and an independent tribunal and appoint a special rapporteur to ensure that the public has access to the latest scientific information and expert judgment on ethical, social, and political that arise in the use of ICTs. They would also work to ensure that the computer and information science professions take pro-</i>	N, I

<i>active public roles in both promoting the socially beneficial uses of ICTs and discouraging harmful ones. They would be responsible for conducting independent research and evaluation of the implementation processes.</i>	
b) <i>Establish cooperation mechanisms at the national, regional and international levels to fight against paedophilia and pornography on the Internet, strengthening a coalition of forces, involving children, industry, policy-makers, educators and parents, to ensure that users are aware of potential dangers and have available to them the necessary means to combat these threats.</i>	N, R, I
c) <i>Elaborate international guidelines on ethical dimensions of ICTs, including the need to guarantee the respect of personal privacy and of human dignity as well as the ethical uses of health and medical information, taking duly into account the context of growing invasive information technologies, surveillance systems and information awareness.</i>	I

10. International and regional cooperation

44. Close international cooperation among national authorities, stakeholders and international organizations in all aspects of the Information Society is more vital today than ever. To this end, advantage should be taken of the opportunities offered by international and regional financial institutions and the UN Regional Commissions.

Actions	Level
a) The UN Family shall work closely together to ensure maximization of synergies and the impact of resources, particularly between UN initiatives and the Development Gateway initiative.	I
b) Government leaders of developing countries should raise the relative priority of ICT projects in requests for international cooperation and assistance on infrastructure development projects from developed countries and international financial organizations.	N, R, I
c) Launch a "Global Digital Compact" as a new pattern for partnership and interaction between governments and non-governmental actors, based on division of labour and specialized responsibilities, as well as on identified specific and common interests, to work together to achieve ICT development goals (e.g. governments create stimulating regulatory environment and fiscal incentives, business bring in technology and made available simple applications, non-governmental organizations undertake awareness campaigns and work at community level etc.; <i>a model that could start from the institutional relationships already existing in ITU, with ITU as coordinator.</i>	I

e) D) Financing and implementation

45. A realistic international **performance monitoring and benchmarking** (both qualitative and quantitative) exercise, through comparable statistical indicators *and research programmes*, could be developed to follow up the implementation of the objectives, goals and targets in the action plan:

Actions	Level
a) A composite ICT Development (Digital Opportunity) Index should be launched and gradually developed. It could be published annually, or every two years, in an ICT Development Report. The index could show the ranking of countries while the report would present analytical work on policies and their implementation, including gender analysis. ITU could coordinate this activity, drawing upon the existing experiences in various organizations, universities, think-tanks etc (2004, then annual or biennial).	I
b) Appropriate indicators and benchmarking should clarify the magnitude of the digital divide, and keep it under regular assessment, <i>with a view to measuring progress made in bridging the gap, and tracking global progress in the use of ICTs to achieve internationally agreed development goals, and to combat poverty.</i>	I
c) Gender-specific indicators on ICT use and needs should be developed, and measurable performance indicators should be identified to assess the impact of funded ICT projects on the lives of women and girls.	N, I
d) Consideration should be given to the incorporation of new community connectivity indicators that allow analysis of the development of communities in which community connectivity is introduced.	N, I
e) A "Handbook on good practices and success stories", could be developed and launched, based on a compilation of contributions from all stakeholders, in a concise and compelling format. The Handbook could be re-issued periodically and turned into a permanent experience-sharing exercise.	I
f) All countries should develop their statistical infrastructure and guarantee high-quality, independent and free access to statistical information. They should provide basic statistical indicators and analysis on the developments of key dimensions of the Information Society. Priority should be given to setting up coherent and internationally comparable indicator systems	N
g) Governments should encourage further research on the significance of the ICT sector and the macro impacts of ICTs on aggregate measures, particularly on productivity. Results of this research should be made available by 2005.	N
h) The WSIS should adopt guidelines that will assist in the development of internationally compatible statistical measurement.	I

i) The development of national strategies should be based on the exchange of international best practices, benchmarking and peer review. A peer review mechanism should be established by 2005	N, I
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46. A commitment to **financing** the different initiatives proposed in this action plan is an essential element in its successful implementation. This will require innovative partnerships between the public and private sectors, and the integration of existing and new sources of financing and implementation mechanisms:

Actions	Level
a) It is proposed to organize, by 2005 at the latest, a donors' roundtable for the purpose of mobilizing the necessary financial resources.	I
b) The international community is called upon to respond appropriately through technical and financial cooperation at both the multilateral and bilateral levels to the relative priority given by LDCs to the development of their ICT infrastructure.	I
c) The private sector should be encouraged to provide ICT goods and services at preferential conditions for specific categories of users, notably not-for-profit organizations directly involved in poverty alleviation.	N, R, I
d) ICTs should be fully mainstreamed into strategies for Official Development Assistance (ODA) through more effective donor information-sharing and co-ordination, and through analysis and sharing of best practices and lessons learned from experience with ICT-for-development programmes.	N, R, I
e) The Monterrey Consensus adopted by the International Conference on Financing for Development recognized that the resources necessary for development must be generated from both domestic and international sources. Developing countries are encouraged to create domestic conditions that are conducive both to generating domestic and attracting international resources and to using these resources effectively for development. For their part, developed countries are encouraged both to provide the additional resources they signalled at the Conference and work towards creating an international environment that is more conducive to development.	N, R, I
f) The unsustainable debt burden should be reduced through debt relief and, as appropriate, debt cancellation.	N, R, I
g) Developed countries that have not already done so should make concrete efforts to fulfil the target level of 0.7 per cent of their Gross Domestic Product as ODA, and the target of earmarking 0.15-0.20% for LDCs.	N, I
h) In developing countries, a mechanism should be established to finance universal access (such as a universal access fund) in order to narrow the digital divide, especially in rural areas.	N, I
i) <i>Financial support should be provided for the preparation of e-strategies and development projects at the national, regional and international levels.</i>	N, R, I

47. It is important to **facilitate access, and to ensure knowledge and technology appropriation by both developed and developing countries**, without discrimination, on concessional, preferential and favourable terms to developing countries, as mutually agreed, taking into account the need to protect intellectual property rights, with the objective of enhancing the technological capacities and capabilities of developing countries, and improving their productivity and competitiveness in the world market.

- a) *Successful technology convergence requires identification and promotion of existing local technologies and technological solutions, as intrinsic elements of the technology capacity of developing countries.*
- b) Research programmes should support and encourage the design, development and adaptation of ICT infrastructure, tools and applications that are responsive to the needs of the poor, including women.
- c) Encourage technology *appropriation* and investment, including venture capital, in the creation of national and regional ICT production facilities, research and development, incubation schemes and SMEs.

E) Towards WSIS phase 2 (Tunis)

48. *To take advantage of the unprecedented win-win situation that an Information Society can yield, concrete action and global commitment are now required. During the second phase of the WSIS, in Tunis, actions to be undertaken could include:*

Actions	Level
a) <i>Elaborate a Charter of digital solidarity for the Information Society(2005)</i>	I
b) Create a digital solidarity fund. The international community is called upon to provide technical and financial cooperation at both the multilateral and bilateral levels, in particular with a view to giving the opportunity to less	I

developed countries to create their ICT infrastructure (2005).	
c) <i>Develop, for presentation at Tunis in 2005, a Framework Document for Information Society Measurements and Analysis.</i>	I
d) Measure progress in implementing the plan of action since the first phase (2005).	N, R, I
e) <i>Elaborate regional action plans(2005).</i>	R
f) Consider the elaboration in the long term, of an international convention on information and communication network security.	I

I