



WSIS Forum 2010: Briefing Note

WSIS Forum 2010 is scheduled to be held from the 10th to 14th May 2010 in Geneva at ITU Headquarters. (www.wsis.org/forum)

In order to ensure the participatory and inclusive spirit of the WSIS Forum 2010, the organizers i.e. ITU, UNESCO, UNCTAD and UNDP, announced an **open consultation process** on the thematic focus of the forum. The open consultation aimed at engaging Governments, international organizations, civil society and the private sector in the preparations of the WSIS Forum 2010.

The open consultation process, consisting of three phases, was well received and appreciated by all. Multiple stakeholders from 48 countries world wide participated in the open consultation process, first proactively discussing the Forum on the WSIS community (www.wsis-community.org), online collaborative platform, and in the second phase, submitting over 110 contributions. In the last stage, the final review meeting of the WSIS Forum 2010 Open Consultations was held on 10th February 2010.

All stakeholders present participated with deep enthusiasm and strong commitment to the WSIS Forum 2010. The final review meeting agreed that the comments and suggestions received during the meeting would serve as inputs for the Draft WSIS Forum 2010 Agenda that was made available for further feedback (see agenda in Annex 1).

In order to ensure that all WSIS stakeholders are fully engaged in the preparatory process and do not lose any opportunity to contribute to this important event, the organizers will hold this **Executive Briefing on the WSIS Forum 2010** on Friday, 9 April 2010, 15:00 – 16:30, in Room C, ITU Headquarters, Geneva.

Format of the Forum

The Forum offers participants a diverse series meetings, including **High-Level Debates** addressing critical issues to the WSIS implementation in multi-stakeholder set-ups, **Interactive WSIS Action Line Facilitation Meetings, Interactive Sessions, Thematic Workshops, Kick-off Meetings** for new initiatives and projects, **Knowledge-Exchanges, Publication Releases, Exhibition**, facilitating networking among participants and others. It provides an opportunity for structured networking, learning and participation in the multi-stakeholder discussions and consultations on the WSIS implementation.

Agenda for WSIS Forum 2010

- **Opening Ceremony**

The **Opening Ceremony** on the 10th of May will consist of an inauguration by panelists representing the Governments, Private Sector, Civil Society and International Organizations. This will be followed with a *high-level Plenary Debate on Turning Targets into Action*

The themes for the **Six High Level Debates** are listed below:

- 1) Turning targets into action
- 2) Build on Broadband
- 3) Broadband applications for Tomorrow
- 4) Social Networking
- 5) ICTs for Disaster Management
- 6) Cybersecurity and cyberspace

1) Opening Ceremony and High Level Plenary Session– Turning Targets into Action: WSIS and MDGs

The year 2010 marks the halfway point between the successful conclusion of the WSIS in 2005 and 2015, the year by which world leaders committed to achieve the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and WSIS targets.

This opening High-Level Plenary Session of the WSIS Forum 2010 will solicit the views and feedback from participants on how far we have come in turning targets into action. Access to ICTs, and broadband in particular, could help facilitate the achievement of many of the education and public health goals contained in the MDGs. This Plenary Session considers whether the WSIS targets are on track to be achieved by 2015, and whether the WSIS targets can facilitate progress towards the MDGs, especially in view of the severe repercussions and detrimental impact of the recent financial crisis on developed and developing countries alike.

2) HL Debate No 1: Build on Broadband

The plenary debate will be followed by the first high level debate entitled "Build on Broadband". This debate will examine the importance of broadband networks in facilitating progress towards achieving the MDGs. High-speed broadband networks carrying advanced applications can enrich education and boost basic hygiene and health awareness while delivering real results in achieving public health goals, a top priority for many developing countries. It can also provide new opportunities for economic growth and international trade and investment. This High-Level Debate will examine the evidence and issues as to how the roll-out of broadband networks could help achieve the MDGs.

3) HL Debate No 2: Broadband Applications for Tomorrow

The promise of broadband infrastructure lies not just in rolling out national high-speed networks accessible for all citizens for boosting economic growth, but also in delivering tailored applications fulfilling the targeted needs of specific communities in education, healthcare, government, energy and the environment.

This High-Level Debate considers the enormous potential of broadband ICT networks for delivering real and tangible benefits in people's everyday lives. High-speed, always-on, real-time communications not only offer efficiency and productivity savings, they also save lives. This High-Level Debate considers how promising new applications have enabled mobile broadband devices to move from being "nice gadgets" into the realm of essential equipment.

4) HL Debate No 3: Social Networking

Internet social networking including blog, wiki, RSS, as new tools, media and platforms based on Web2.0 application, has gained ubiquitous popularity throughout the world and had a wide range of political and social implications for information society. On April 8 2009, Facebook celebrated having its 200 millionth active user and at the beginning of 2010, this number has increased to 360 million. The biggest social networking website Qzone in China has got 376 million registered accounts last year, and at the moment of 19:52 on 5 March of 2010, Qzone declared it had 100 million users online at the same time.

The high level debate will gather worldwide multi-stakeholders including industry leaders, policy makers, civil society, legal experts and users to provide a panorama on the state of art of social networking applications and exchange their visions on the opportunities and threats of these tools for future. The panel also tends to trigger brainstorming and debates on burning issues of social networking related to WSIS Plan Actions which might include:

- Potential to reinvent political and civic participation
- Challenge to freedom of expression and privacy
- Impact on media and citizen journalism
- Implications to empower youth for development

The whole discussion will ultimately inform the ongoing implementation process of WSIS towards building an inclusive information society and put the potential of ICTs at the service of development, particularly as defined by UN Millennium Development goals.

5) HL Debate No 4: ICTs for Disaster Management

Disasters disrupt national economies, severely weaken the poor and vulnerable and are recognized as major impediments to sustainable development and reduction of poverty especially in least developed countries and small island developing states. When disasters strike they leave a legacy of lost or broken lives and economic damage. The impact is even worse for those living in remote and isolated areas with no access to basic information and communication facilities.

ICTs play a critical role in disaster predication, monitoring, and detection. ICT can save human lives through the timely dissemination of early warning alerts. In the immediate aftermath of disasters, ICT plays an important role to coordinate search and rescue operations, the supply of food, medicine and other essential services, and in providing critical information to the victims of disasters. Emergency Telecommunications play a critical role in the immediate aftermath of disasters by ensuring timely flow of vital information which is much needed by government agencies, and other humanitarian actors that are involved in rescue operations and providing medical assistance to the injured.

One of the biggest challenges of our time is the recent upsurge and increase in the frequency and devastation of disasters as evidenced by the Cyclone Nargis that hit Myanmar, the Sichuan earthquake that affected China, the 12 January 2010 Haiti earthquake, and the 27th February 2010 Chile earthquake. In March 2010, a series of disasters were also experienced to include floods in Uganda, Zambia, and Mozambique to the Turkey earthquake, the earthquakes in China and Sumatra, and Cyclones in Fiji.

6) HL Debate No 5: Cybersecurity and cyberspace

ICTs have been widely adopted throughout our society, but these very same ICT systems are at severe risk from growing cyber-threats. Today, new and sophisticated cyber-threats, cyber-attacks and, more recently, cyber-warfare, pose strong challenges to the safety, integrity, reliability and confidentiality of modern communications and the networks over which these are transmitted. Growing cyber-attacks can also be a challenge to States' national security and international peace. In 2007, ITU Secretary-General launched the Global Cybersecurity Agenda (GCA) to provide a framework within which an international response to the growing threats and challenges can be coordinated and addressed. The GCA strives to engage all relevant stakeholders in a concerted effort to build confidence and security in the information society. This High-Level debate will provide the forum to discuss how best promote international cooperation. Please note that this Debate is jointly organized with UNICRI and UNIDIR.

- **Interactive Sessions**

The thematic focus of **Interactive Sessions for Action Lines** incorporate all the inputs from the submissions by stakeholders and the co organizers (UNCTAD, UNESCO and UNDP) during the open consultative process.

- ICT for disabled
- ICT and education
- ICT and gender
- ICT and environment (climate change, e-waste, etc.)
- ICT for youth and aging
- ICT for indigenous people
- E-Government: Best practices / Management of the information and ICTs
- E-health (various issues)
- Open access to information and knowledge / Libraries
- Web 2.0 / Social networking / Information literacy
- Financial Mechanisms
- MDGs / Poverty reduction
- Information Society for marginalized
- Role of ICT in rural development
- Community media and radio
- Mobile/online security / trust
- Cultural and linguistic diversity and local content
- Convergence between traditional and new ICTs
- Disaster management
- Enhancing ICT infrastructure / connectivity / LDCs, SIDS
- ICTs for data collection and analysis
- Information ethics
- ICT and human rights

- **Thematic Workshops**

Some of the topics suggested during the open consultation will be incorporated in **Thematic Workshops**. We have received several requests from countries in Africa, Spain and Congo amongst others for organizing workshops during WSIS Forum 2010.

- **Announced Publications Releases**

Following list includes some of the publications to be released during the WSIS Forum 2010:

1. World Telecommunication Development Report 2010
2. National e-Strategies Development
3. WSIS Stocktaking Report
4. WSIS – MDG Matrix: Strategic framework
5. ITU's WSIS Plus 5 Report
6. UNESCO WSIS Mid-term Assessment: The way ahead

- **Exhibition**

During the WSIS Forum 2010 an exhibition area will be provide to stakeholders. This space will be used for sharing success stories on ICT implementation, display ICT Content and reference material, showcase innovation in the area of ICTs and exchange of information and knowledge.

The material deposited, showcased by stakeholders will be used by ITU to build a repository of ICTD Content, publications, documentaries and so on. This repository is aimed at building a single point of reference for content with reference to the WSIS implementation process.

Registration for WSIS Forum 2010

Registrations for WSIS Forum 2010 have begun. Based on our previous experience we expect to welcome around 600 distinguished participants at the WSIS Forum 2010.

Update on WSIS Stocktaking

The **WSIS stocktaking** process was initiated during the Tunis phase of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) in 2005. Its goal is to provide a register of activities carried out by governments, international organizations, the business sector, civil society and other entities, in order to highlight the progress made since that landmark event. According Para § 120 of the *Tunis Agenda for the Information Society*, ITU has been maintaining the WSIS stocktaking database as a publicly accessible system providing information on ICT-related initiatives and projects with reference to the 11 WSIS Action Lines.

As a follow up to the WSIS, an upgraded stocktaking platform has been launched by ITU. As of today more than 1800 stakeholders from 140 countries are pro-actively contributing to the WSIS Stocktaking process, simultaneously creating unique community of WSIS implementers benefiting from interactive functionalities of the Platform. The upgraded WSIS Stocktaking Platform integrates improved features, such as the application of web 2.0 tools, a searchable database and embeddable interfaces. It is strongly believed that introduced new components like a global calendar of WSIS related events, the ability to create communities of practice and forums for discussion, will serve as effective instruments of information circulation and communication among stakeholders.

Additional Notes on Participation

- Debates: We invite all stakeholders to **participate actively** in all the High Level Debates, Interactive sessions, Thematic Workshops and Interactive Facilitation Meetings. All the sessions are in the form of debates to ensure inclusion and participation.

- All **contributors** are invited to submit power point presentations/ written materials as support material that will be made available on the WSIS Forum 2010 website. Its use during the oral contribution should be limited. Documents: With the aim of ensuring the best possible visibility of your efforts, we encourage you to share **analytical reports/publications** related to Information Society Development. All stakeholders are requested to kindly submit the digital file with cover (jpg or gif) and web link of the publications or the digital version of the document to the secretariat.
- All WSIS Stakeholders are kindly invited to submit **testimonials** sharing experiences for the testimonial **section of the WSIS Forum 2011 website**.
- Responding to requests from Stakeholders to focus on hands on implementation; all WSIS Stakeholders are requested to submit **success stories of projects related to WSIS Implementation** to the WSIS Stocktaking Platform at www.wsis.org/stocktaking as well as use the kick off meetings as opportunity for creation of win-win multistakeholder partnerships. Please note that the submitted success stories/ project descriptions will serve as reference material for respective WSIS Action Line Facilitation Meetings.
- **Kick Off Meetings:** The WSIS Forum 2010 aims at facilitating networking among the WSIS stakeholders interested in joining forces and launching implementation related initiatives or projects. **Kick Off Meetings** will take place every day in the dedicated space at the entrance of Montbrillant Building. Thematic tables will facilitate the participants to start direct interaction with other WSIS Stakeholders.

Should you look for partners for your new initiative or wish further develop you on-going project submit your request for space for Kick-Off meeting to be held during the WSIS Forum 2010. If you would like to book your space for a Kick off meeting space please download the Kick off meeting form at the following link:
<http://www.itu.int/wsis/implementation/2010/forum/geneva/kick-offs.html>

Once you submit the form to us we will schedule a slot for your meeting. Results of the kickoff meetings will be highlighted by display on all the information screens during the WSIS Forum 2010.

- Exhibition: We welcome you to please participate in the **Exhibition** at WSIS Forum 2010 to display and share your projects and success stories with the other participants. Please download exhibition request form at the following link:
<http://www.itu.int/wsis/implementation/2010/forum/geneva/exhibition.html>

The Exhibition aims to offer WSIS stakeholders an opportunity to showcase at an international level activities carried out by them in context of the WSIS outcomes.

Stands located at the entrance of the ITU Montbrillant building and the networking

atmosphere will make possible to meet new potential partners and to learn about their flagship initiatives.

- **Knowledge Exchanges** represent a new alternative to promote the importance of interactivity and stakeholder involvement. The main goal of this sessions depict a transcendental opportunity to exchange information on the critical issues for the WSIS implementation addressed during the high level sessions, WSIS action line facilitation meetings and others.

Knowledge Exchanges will take place every day in the dedicated space at the entrance of the Montbrillant Building. Thematic tables will facilitate the participants to start direct interaction with other WSIS Stakeholders.

In order to participate in the Knowledge Exchanges please download the following Knowledge Exchange Form at the following link:

<http://www.itu.int/ws/implementation/2010/forum/geneva/exchanges.html>

For further details please visit: www.wsis.org/forum

Contact us at: wsis-info@itu.int