WORLD SUMMIT ON THE
INFORMATION SOCIETY

WSIS FORUM
2012 | 2013

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IDENTIFYING
EMERGING
TRENDS AND A
VISION
BEYOND 2015

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working together towards 2015
World Summit
on the Information Society
Geneva 2003 Tunis 2005
Turning targets into action

world summit
on the information society
Geneva 2003 - Tunis 2005

Facilitated by:

ITU

WSIS Forum 2012 and WSIS Forum 2013 - Identifying emerging trends and a vision beyond 2015

(Draft 1.0)

WSIS Forums 2012 and 2013 resulted in Outcome Documents that capture the outcomes and recommendations from more than 150 sessions at the WSIS Forum, held in a multistakeholder format. Since 2009, the WSIS Forum has proven to be a unique platform for multistakeholder brainstorming and consensus on emerging trends in the area of Information Society. With Information and communications technologies (ICTs) playing an increasingly instrumental role in the delivery of basic services like education, health and food security, improved ICT connectivity, infrastructure, security and access have become a major development imperative.

This booklet captures the emerging trends in the 11 WSIS Action Lines, both in terms of policy and technology, as discussed by stakeholders during WSIS Forums 2012 and 2013 and finalized by the Action Line focal points, from United Nations agencies. The trends identified during WSIS Forums 2012 and 2013 provide the WSIS stakeholder community with guidance for the vision beyond 2015 (WSIS+10).

This booklet is a byproduct of the WSIS Forums 2012 and 2013 Outcome Documents, it is available at:

www.itu.int/itu-wsis | www.wsis.org/review

Action Line: C1

C1

The role of public governance authorities and all stakeholders in the promotion of ICTs for Development

WSIS Forum 2012

- The need to develop a master plan for parliaments in order to avoid piecemeal, uncoordinated and non-sustainable activities;

- The increasing importance of a coherent evaluation system, both locally and nationally;

- The urgency to continue developing national e-strategies beyond 2015.

WSIS Forum 2013

- The need to step up support in the review of current e-strategies in line with the new development agenda;

- The need to raise awareness of National Statistical Offices on the role of Information and Communication Technology for Development (ICT4D) and to put in place systematic data collection processes and methodologies in line with the core ICT indicators adopted by the Partnership on Measuring ICTs for Development;

- The need to promote a multistakeholder approach to measuring ICT4D and WSIS targets in order to get maximum information;

- The urgency to stimulate the role of parliaments in the promotion of the Information Society;

- The urgent need to promote the use of ICT as a means to modernize parliamentary processes and increase transparency;

- The increasing necessity to create a global community of parliamentary ICT professionals and Members of Parliament;

- Since its inception in 2005, 246 out of 267 national parliamentary chambers around the world participated in one or more activities of the Global Centre for ICT in Parliament, and 148 have participated on more than five occasions.

Action Line: C2

C2

Information and Communication Infrastructure

WSIS Forum 2012

- The demand for broadband services is increasing and spectrum management to utilize underused radio frequencies is vital for economical and societal development;

- New technological/regulatory approach and convergence between broadcasting and mobile services needs to be considered;

- Transition from analogue to digital terrestrial broadcasting is essential to benefit consumers by more choice and quality in television services, and also to free up radio spectrum for new services;

- New services, business models and regulations will provide new opportunities for business entities to enter the rural/remote areas market, which needs close participation of policy-makers and regulators;

- Development of affordable and easy-to-use devices, as well as education, are necessary to expand ICT usage to undeveloped rural areas;

- To meet the uprising demand of broadband services a secure, inexpensive and broad backbone is necessary, especially for developing countries.

WSIS Forum 2013

- Due to data traffic explosion, it is estimated that network costs could exceed revenue in the near future. There is an urgent need to develop new technologies and standards to lower the cost of broadband backbone infrastructure;

- As data centres change from hardware-defined to software-defined, software-based solutions running on standardized hardware could be implemented to telecommunication networks to reduce expenses and increase scalability;

- Background data increasingly important for the planning of reliable and efficient broadband backbone networks without duplication. The knowledge of the current situation of regional and cross-border broadband networks is essential for identifying the missing linkage for connecting the unconnected;

- The development of new business models and financing arrangements for funding broadband backbone development is of the utmost importance. Policies to ensure network openness and ubiquitous connectivity through network sharing and competition will be key to attract private investment;

- Broadband backbone development is a long-term investment, especially in rural areas and requires a solid strategy with regard to elements such as types of service, transmission capacity, etc. Investment from both the government and market forces are found to be necessary;

- Network operation, maintenance and management are the highest priorities, and mean time to repair (MTTR) might be a valuable criterion. A functional organization at regional, national and continental level is necessary to operate and maintain functional networks.

Action Line: C3
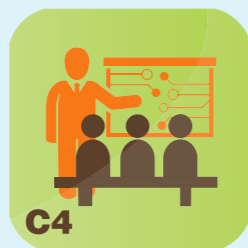
C3

Access to Information and Knowledge

WSIS Forum 2012

- The urgency of the innovative use and mainstreaming of ICTs for inclusive education;

- The increasing importance of the development of content respecting accessibility and open standards, particularly for the web;

- The need for the development of multilingual and accessible Open Education Resources (OER);

- The urgency of ICTs in education for persons with disabilities in order to provide new and innovative solutions for persons with disabilities to access information and knowledge;

- The increasing importance of training education professionals, such as teachers, to use accessible ICTs in education for training of people with disabilities;

- The urgency to promote Universal Design for All.

WSIS Forum 2013 and WSIS+10 Event

- Fostering "Access to Open Access" by creating public use access spaces and lowering barriers for access to technology;

- Developing universal criteria and vocabulary to foster rapid implementation and better understanding of FOSS and Open Systems Solutions;

- Fostering the use of Open Systems Solutions as effective long-term sustainability priorities to address UNESCO's four key challenge areas;

- Fostering professional training ("education of the educators") as well as children's elementary education, into and through Open Systems;

- Acknowledging, supporting and promoting small-scale, independent or user-defined FOSS incubators, highlighting the interconnectivity between individual tools and methodologies to create thoroughly comprehensive Open Systems Solutions;

- Linking the economic and long-term sustainability advantages of Open Systems Solutions in the allocation of public funds and procurement processes;

- Securing and enhancing the creation of accessible Open Knowledge Commons that enable access to the growing range of Open Systems Solutions, including FOSS, Open Data, Open Hardware and their related processes, methodologies and experiences.

Action Line: C4

C4

Capacity Building

WSIS Forum 2012

- The increasing importance of the development of enabling policies for m-learning;

- The need to provide professional development to teachers on using mobile technologies to support teaching and learning;

- The need for more affordable and relevant devices, content and connectivity, including smart phones, notepads, tablets and integrated digital textbooks;

- The need for creating an ecosystem for the safe use of mobile technologies for education, including by teaching digital citizenship and responsible use to learners;

- The necessity for success stories based on private-public partnerships to popularise and roll out m-learning initiatives;

- The growing importance of research in the area of m-learning, particularly on 1:1 pedagogy under 1:1 computing learning settings.

WSIS Forum 2013

- A growing number of countries are implementing e-learning strategies and programmes at national level and , as a result, there is growing massification and multiplication of ICT users;

- There is a trend of increased partnerships between public and private sector in national e-skilling programmes;

- There is a need to introduce "Training the Trainer" programmes;

- There is an urgent need for the development of ICT infrastructure and technologies in parallel with e-skilling and human capacity building;

- The growing importance of up-skilling and reskilling of e-skilled students due to the fast-changing environment.

Action Line: C5

C5

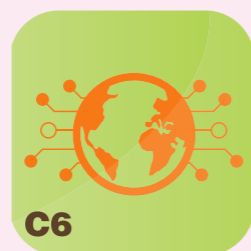# Building Confidence and Security in the use of ICTs

WSIS Forum 2012

- The need to establish strategies and capabilities at the national level to ensure protection of national critical infrastructures, while enabling prevention and prompt response to cyberthreats. Computer Incident Response Teams with national responsibilities and national cybersecurity frameworks are key elements toward the achievement of cybersecurity;

- The urgent need for building a solid legal framework to address existing and emerging cybercrimes at national, regional and international levels;

- The urgency to build human capacity, to improve the skills and expertise of security professionals and increase the awareness of the general public;

- The increasing need to work with the business sector, such as manufacturers and operators, to pave the way toward the achievement of the "security by design" concept, where devices and products contain standard security features to reduce the exploitation of vulnerabilities;

- The need for an international framework focused on the elaboration of norms and principles agreed at global level, specifically in the following areas:
  - access to the Internet;
  - security;
  - protection of fundamental rights;
  - state involvement; and
  - international cooperation.

WSIS Forum 2013

- The urgent need to introduce cyberrisk analysis and risk management;

- The growing importance of pursuing national, regional and international frameworks;

- The urgency to ensure that the child online safety element is imbedded in the work stream of Action Line C5;

- The importance of accounting for the "human element" as priority;

- The importance of evidence-based policy-making to support decision-makers in identifying best strategies;

- The importance of safety or security by design. Products should have built-in security features to prevent the dissemination of cyberthreats;

- Concerning the legal and regulatory frameworks:
  - the need for greater awareness to overcome the lack of understanding;
  - the urgency for cross border harmonization;
  - the growing need for enforcement.

Action Line: C6

C6

Enabling Environment

WSIS Forum 2012

- The increasing importance of defining and implementing national broadband strategies in collaboration with all stakeholders;

- The increasing importance of an open, efficient and secure policy and regulatory environment;

- The urgency of adapting the legislative and regulatory framework in order to have a smarter regulation and ensure the use of ICTs for better governance;

- The need for smart regulation based on open consultation involving all stakeholders, inclusive of actions and good coordination. Regulatory challenges facing developing countries are becoming more complex and cross-cutting;

- To improve e-government for business it is important to set up a new legal framework, public campaign and standards for interoperability;

- High investments in optical fibre are needed to provide broadband services and access to Internet services for all;

- Good and proper recycling policy, climate policy and processes for cheaper devices are essential for better governance;

- Access to information and ICTs services needs to be considered as a human right;

- Good public governance can leverage ICTs in various ways to increase efficiency and accountability, enhance transparency and facilitate public sector reforms. ICTs can ensure a wider participation and empowerment of citizens, institutions and private sector in the decision-making process.
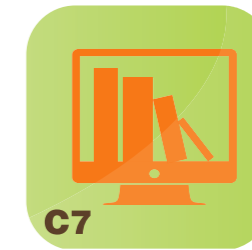
WSIS Forum 2013

- The growing importance of enhancing greater collaboration and participation in multistakeholder processes of consumers, with a view to ensure that their needs are taken into consideration and that they benefit from broadband services;

- The need to increase consumer awareness, to encourage innovative ways to promote resource efficiency and to foster the cooperation between ICT and environmental sectors in the field of greening the ICT sector;

- The urgency to conduct a review for the purpose of adapting international guidelines related to consumer protection policies with respect to internet protocol (IP) based networks and cloud computing environment;

- The need for smart regulation based on open consultations involving all stakeholders, inclusive of actions and good coordination;

- The need for a regulatory framework that balances the interests of suppliers and users in areas such as the protection of intellectual property rights, data protection and digital rights management, without disadvantaging innovation.

Action Line: C7

ICT Applications
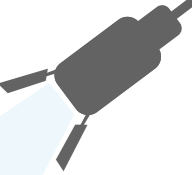
Action Line: C7

C7

E-government

WSIS Forum 2012

- The efficient exchange of best practices through electronic means and the use of new media to inform and connect citizens to e-government and sustainable development processes are of paramount importance;

- The increasing need to bridge the digital divide by better promoting e-skills and suitable infrastructure in the developing world and amongst valuable social groups;

- Further development in applying green ITC technology through e-governance will contribute to sustainable economic, financial and social development.

WSIS Forum 2013

- The increasing possibility of entering in a legally binding relation with the government using a mobile signature. Some countries have already started building the necessary infrastructure. Increasingly the mobile is being used for electronic signature;

- There are at present over 260 country and city open data initiatives. There is no "standard" solution–each initiative is shaped by a specific national context;

- Example shared at the e-government session: The e-government facilities of the Kingdom of Bahrain are designed to enable access to people with disabilities.

Action Line: C7

C7

E-business

WSIS Forum 2012

- The increasing number of changes in the ICT landscape and more accessible technology, notably mobile and international broadband connectivty, will influence the creation of local content and the ability of developing countries to market their ICT products;

- ICT and ICT-enabled services are an increasingly important share of the ICT sector worldwide;

- There is a lack of data on the ICT sector to support policy decisions, including on increasingly important services. The IT industry itself may contribute data to support the planning needs of policy-makers for the promotion of the local ICT sector.

WSIS Forum 2013

- There is a need to ensure the sustainability of e-business solutions by engaging users as well as local and global ecosystem players, in innovation processes from the early stages of design and testing;

- Governments should take steps to develop enabling environments for e-business and adopt e-commerce regulations consistent with the cross-border nature of e-commerce;

- There is a need to facilitate business-to-consumer e-commerce to bring down the costs of shipping and delivery and address logistic bottlenecks;

- In least developed countries, capacities in IT and Internet-related subjects need to be strengthened, including in business-related components;

- More statistical data and analysis is required to enable stakeholders to better understand e-commerce and e-business trends and impacts;

- New ways should be explored to allow grass-roots practitioners and thought leaders to better influence macro-level discussions on e-business, including through participatory technologies such as social media.

Action Line: C7

C7

E-learning

WSIS Forum 2012

- The increasing importance of the development of enabling policies for m-learning;

- The need to provide professional development to teachers on the use of mobile technologies to support teaching and learning;

- The need for more affordable and relevant devices, content and connectivity, including smart phones, notepads, tablets and integrated digital textbooks;

- The need for creating an ecosystem for the safe use of mobile technologies for education, including by teaching digital citizenship and responsible use to learners;

- The necessity for success stories based on private-public partnerships to popularise and roll out m-learning initiatives;

- The growing importance of research in the area of m-learning, particularly on 1:1 pedagogy under 1:1 computing learning settings.

WSIS Forum 2013 and 2013 WSIS+10 Event

The trends below primarily focus on the use of mobile devices for learning (m-learning):

- The use of mobile devices is an important element of intervention to expand learning opportunities as well as to increase the quality of learning since these are the most prevalent interactive ICT in the hands of people today, in both developed and developing countries;

- Mobile technologies have the potential to respond to the challenges of particular educational contexts in formal and informal settings; supplement and enrich formal schooling; and, in general, make learning more accessible, equitable and flexible for learners;

- The use of mobiles has ,for education, a unique role to play in the strengthening of educational systems, by improving communication between stakeholders and supporting educational management information systems (EMIS) and school leaders;

- Mobiles can supplement teaching and empower teachers by assisting them to reach more learners in more effective ways, providing a broader spectrum of pedagogical approaches and improving the quality of learning;

- For broader benefits to women and girls, mobiles can be extended beyond learning, to improve their security and status in their respective communities, to strengthen their connection to the world and to other women, to maximise the potential of economic opportunities, and to increase their autonomy.

Action Line: C7

C7

E-health

WSIS Forum 2012

- The commitment to adopt national e-health strategies and focus on integrating ICTs to support the priorities of the health sector;

- The increasing use of mobile technologies in health projects is still being done on a trial basis rather than on a large scale;

- The need for sound evidence (and sharing the evidence) as to the impact of e-health, through credible and reproducible evaluation mechanisms;

- The ongoing need for communities of expertise to support health professionals working in remote areas;

- The ongoing need to ensure affordable, reliable connectivity to health centres, institutions and remote areas. This is a core aspect of WSIS commitments yet to be realized.

WSIS Forum 2013

- The increasing use of mobile technologies in health services/information; projects are still on a trial basis and have not so far reached large scale;

- The need for sound evidence (and sharing the evidence) as to the impact of e-health, through credible and reproducible evaluation mechanisms;

- The need to empower health professionals, including those working in remote areas, with access to the information they need to provide high-quality, safe care;

- The commitment to adopt national e-health strategies and focus on integrating ICTs to support the priorities of the health sector;

- The ongoing need to ensure affordable, reliable connectivity to health centres, institutions and remote areas. This is a core aspect of WSIS commitments that has yet to be realized;

- The WSIS process must remind the world that core commitments have not been met and that it will have to step up its efforts.

WSIS Forum 2012

- There is an urgent need for a stronger reference to the main challenges related to key environmental issues, such as climate change, electronic waste management and disaster risk reduction, to ensure sustainable development. In this regard, it is key to make sure that investments in climate and weather observing as well as ICT\ telecommunications support the sustainable development agenda;

- The increasing importance of emphasizing on the need for cooperation between ICTs and the environmental sector at national level, so that both levels of policies include cross-references. At present, this cross-sectorial coordination is not sufficient and it poses a challenge for many initiatives with regard to e-environment;

- It is urgent to address the negative effects of ICTs (Greening the ICT sector), an issue that has become more urgent since the WSIS process started. In this regard, more emphasis should be put on adopting a life-cycle management approach for ICTs, looking at policy, standards, consumer education and design innovation to promote resource efficiency. Responsibility needs to extend beyond government and corporations to include the end user (the general population), specifically by increasing consumer awareness and improved use of social media. Attention should be directed to management including the disposal of out-of-life ICT equipment;

- With regard to energy consumption, there is an urgent need to pay additional emphasis on measuring performance and establishing reduction goals. Agreeing on a common set of methodologies and engaging the private sector to adopt these standards are two important steps that need to be further promoted.

Action Line: C7

C7

E-environment

WSIS Forum 2013

- Looking into the future, the WSIS+10 process should analyse if Action Line C7 e-environment should be reviewed to broaden its scope into e-sustainability. This change would allow for more flexibility to the areas that have been brought to the attention of this Action Line. There is a need to translate all available data into useful information for the most vulnerable people;

- It is essential that the Action Line spurs inter-sectoral cooperation between the ICT community and the environmental, the meteorological community, and other groups working around sustainability. This collaboration should take place at international, national and regional levels;

- There is an ongoing need for communities to be actively involved in the application of ICTs to address sustainability issues, in particular climate change;

- While ICTs are critically important, the challenge of climate change can also be fully met through stronger political will.

Action Line: C7

E-agriculture

WSIS Forum 2012

- A growing body of experience shows the clear benefits of ICT in facilitating information flows and social networks, and the positive impact ICT can have on the livelihoods of people in rural agricultural communities;

- Mobile technology is the dominant tool in agricultural information services, and is expected to remain so. Where mobile is not the predominant communication tool, pricing and policy related to mobile services were identified as the main challenges that need to be addressed;

- Continued growth of mobile technology and information services using mobile technology is expected;

- Critical opportunities will come from improved content, including hyperlocal information;

- Market segmentation is expected;

- A focus on rural women has emerged.

WSIS Forum 2013

- Support is needed for a multistakeholder approach to develop and implement e-agriculture strategies;

- Youth must be mentored and encouraged to enhance the agricultural sector through their own ICT innovations, ICT service development and provisions, as well as through the implementation of ICT innovations developed elsewhere;

- Fully integrating ICT (including content and capacity) into national and regional agricultural policies and investments plans has become critical. At the same time, the agriculture sector must be prioritized in national and regional ICT policies and investment plans;

- There is an urgent need for affordable and quality ICT access providing relevant, quality and actionable content in rural areas, with a particular focus on agricultural smallholders, women and youth;

- There is a growing need for resources in the sharing of good practices and capacity development in e-agriculture strategies and projects;

- E-agriculture strategies should be highlighted by the WSIS stocktaking and the outcomes processes, so as to fully reflect the development of ICT, including mobile devices, in the agricultural sector and to identify more opportunities.

WSIS Forum 2012

- The need to continue to promote e-publishing with different pricing options and open access. (To make scientific findings more affordable and accessible);

- The increasing importance of p2p technology to share scientific knowledge;

- The importance of promoting affordable and reliable broadband Internet connection for learning, particularly in higher education institutions;

- The need to promote long-term collection/dissemination/preservation of scientific data. (for example: population and weather data) by digitalization;

- The urgency to facilitate cooperation and effective use of scientific information.

WSIS Forum 2013 and 2013 WSIS+10 Event

- Operationalizing e-science is a necessity and urgency for science technolology and innovation (STI) to be effectively used to achieve the MDGs and all internationally agreed development goals. Strengthening e-science facilitates the use of several applications (internet, mobile technology, radio), particularly in, least developed countries (LDCs) and in remote places such as small islands that allow citizens, including marginalized groups, to participate in Science, access services and governance processes that would not necessarily be available to them in their community. However, for e-science to be more relevant, exisiting mechanisms such as community multimedia centres could be strengthened so that citizens, particularly the youth, can be trained to use these tools. Additionally, the possibility of making these tools available in local and indigenous languages should be explored. The use of ICTs is important in the production, advance and application of science and it facilitates improved science, society and policy interface;

- E-science can act as an important tool in the development of applications in sectors critical to society such as natural disasters, agriculture, water security, health, poverty, education, research and innovation and intellectual property. Many societal opportunities have arisen as a result of the application of e-science tools, including in relation to dealing with citizen choices and science-based evaluation of issues at the heart of society's priorities and preoccupations;

- Harnessing the true potential of digital science anticipates the transformational capacity of science within science itself, as well as in terms of the various applications for the benefit of society;

- Access to ICTs remains a challenge to be tackled and met. It includes access to energy and appropriate technology to enable access to the Internet, the needed cultural change to promote the use of the Internet and the need to develop tailored policies to support e-science;

- Sound science techhnology and innovation (STI) systems create an enabling environment in which e-science can enhance the effectiveness of the science-policy-society interface by improving access of policy-makers and society to knowledge and to the outcomes of scientific assessments. A number of scientific assessments carried out so far in relation to climate change, biodiversity and ecosystem services and agriculture indicate the need for a web-based multidisciplinary knowledge system that critically reviews and synthesize new knowledge in as a real time as possible. Therefore developing a web-based platform in support of the policy and for the benefit of science and society should be a priority. This platform will allow open and free access to scientific knowledge and allow countries to optimize their capacities to use e-Science to pursue their development and learning objectives. The web-based platform will also assist in linking current discussions on the post-2015 development agenda with the Rio+20 outcomes because it will be used to strengthen the function of the newly-formed UNESCO-led Scientific Advisory Board.

Action Line: C7

C7

E-science

Action Line: C8

Cultural Diversity and identity, linguistic diversity and local content

WSIS Forum 2012

- Countries (at all income levels) with more Internet infrastructure are also the countries producing more local digital content, as measured by Wikipedia entries and webpages under a given country-code, top-level domain;

- Countries with more international connectivity have lower domestic broadband prices and countries with better domestic infrastructure have lower international bandwidth prices;

- The increasing inter-linkages between the different elements lead to three key lines of policy considerations evolving: (i) fostering content development, (ii) expanding connectivity, and (iii) promoting internet access competition.

WSIS Forum 2013 and 2013 WSIS+10 Event

- Opportunities to develop measures and policies to safeguard endangered languages and promote multilingualism can be identified in the framework of the existing UNESCO International normative tools, and in particular its Conventions in the field of culture;

- The first and most important step, especially in countries where many languages are spoken, is to identify, map and survey all the languages. The second step is to document those that require most urgent attention;

- There is a trend to expand and appropriate culturally sensitive e-government and e-community initiatives with a specific indigenous peoples focus when these strategies are being developed in local areas. Providing alternative ways for Indigenous Peoples to access e-services should be a priority, as ICTs for them are crucial means for promoting their knowledge, traditions and languages, as well as managing their cultural and tangible heritage, landscapes and biological diversity.

Action Line: C9

Media

WSIS Forum 2012

- The increasing challenge of addressing freedom of expression and privacy protection on Internet in formulating an inclusive information society;

- The application and implementation of principles, standards and recommendations of freedom of expression to the Internet and social media in practice, given the complexity of the information environment on the Internet and conflicting imperatives, including freedom of expression, respect for privacy and the challenge of applicable jurisdiction posed by the trans-border nature of cyberspace;

- The increasing challenge of dealing with the liability of intermediaries and governmental surveillance, particularly in relation to freedom of expression on internet and privacy protection;

- The challenge of optimizing the role of traditional media, such as public service broadcasters and community radios, by embracing new media platforms and user-generated content in the emerged Internet era.

WSIS Forum 2013 and 2013 WSIS+10 Event

- It was recognized that the expanded role of media and Internet/mobile and digital platform based on new media as promoted by WSIS Action Line C9, is more instrumental than ever in fostering transparent and good governance and contributing to the rights-based, sustainable development goals of the post-2015 agenda;

- Over the past decade of WSIS implementation, the Internet profoundly impacted media's scope, reach and richness, as well as its breadth of direct stakeholders and its sustainability, and should be a core issue to consider in the current process of updating the post-2015 strategy of WSIS Action Line C9 – Media;

- With the emergence of Internet and online media, sustained efforts are needed to acheive the balance between online freedom and other rights such as privacy, as well as to tackle the increased complexity of defending freedom of expression and advancing media development in the digital era;

- Defending public service broadcasting and developing community media need to be further explored, particularly in the areas of pluralism and functional differentiation as compared to each other and to social media, sustainability models, technical coordination, spectrum management, harmonization of commercial and public interests, digital safety, legislative and regulatory frameworks, digital literacy/media and information literacy;

- It is necessary to conceptualize the evolving mediascape within a broader framework, such as "Internet Universality" as UNESCO is exploring, in order to formulate the post-2015 media-ICTs converged strategy and facilitate collaboration between C9 and other relevant WSIS Action Lines. There is a need to continue the ongoing multistakeholder consultative and participatory process to update post-2015 strategy and formulate a coordinated strategy with stakeholders, including UN agencies on the implementation of Action Line C9 media feeding into post-2015 development agenda.

WSIS Forum 2012

- The increasing role of technology is enabling decentralized approaches to policy and decision-making that enhances participation;

- The increasing role of human rights as a positive contribution to online commerce, with more and more businesses voluntarily adopting codes of practice. These efforts are serving to provide consistency and predictable frameworks both off-line and on-line with increasing checks, balances and protections for stakeholders;

- User-driven models may provide better alternatives than consumer-driven and regulatory focused approaches to understanding the drivers of social change and ethical behavior on-line amongst individual and groups;

- Information literacy is essential for empowering users to make informed choices as well as for enabling them to exercise and protect their rights;

- While the focus is currently on ensuring that all persons can access the Internet, there is also recognition of a need to discuss the right to disconnect and its implications;

- While beneficial in helping to expand our freedom, technologies can be disruptive. Our organizations and societies need to become sufficiently flexible to cope with the social upheavals that technology brings;

- The fast changing and often unpredictable character of new Internet-related developments may exceed our abilities to predict and utilize forecast analysis for taking actions, including at the policy level.

Action Line: C10

C10

Ethical dimensions of the Information Society

WSIS Forum 2013 and 2013 WSIS+10 Event

The international and interdisciplinary reflection and debate on the ethical challenges of emerging technologies and the information society continues. Such reflection and debate tends today to have a multitiered dimension that connects to policy and advisory bodies, with particular attention to the participation of developing countries and sensitivity to their needs. Among themes of particular relevance in examining the interface between information technologies, social transformation and governance are the relation between human rights and ethical principles for the information society; the challenges of interculturality in information ethics; the possible tensions between freedom of expression and moral harm; issues of privacy and security; issues of free access to public and governmental information; and the fundamental question of personal and collective identities in a digital world.

- In order to support equitable participation of all stakeholders, efforts should be made, including through UNESCO programmes where appropriate, to build or strengthen regional and national capacity in to analyse, discuss and respond to the ethical challenges of the information society;

- Awareness should be raised of the ethical implications of the information society, particularly among young people, along with life-long education initiatives to equip all citizens with the skills and competence to participate actively and knowledgeably in the information society. New info-ethica and info-civic pedagogical paradigms, including but not limited to e-learning, could be envisaged in this regard to support new modes of global citizenship fully integrating digital media and virtual political spaces;

- Freedom of expression should be affirmed as a fundamental right and as the basis for reflection on its responsible use in the context of broader consideration of freedom of access to information, particularly public and governmental and of the right to communication in a framework of cultural sensitivity, tolerance, and dialogue;

- Consideration should be given to the ethical principles that bear on technological and social issues in the information society and underlie specific regulatory frameworks, whether or not such principles are enshrined in existing normative instruments or codes of conduct. Of particular importance in this regard is the analysis of gaps and lags that hamper policy in the face of the ethical challenges of the information society, with a view to supporting policy-makers and stakeholders in moving in synchrony with technological advance rather than reacting after the fact.
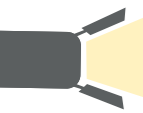
Action Line: C11

C11

International and regional cooperation

WSIS Forum 2012

- The importance of international cooperation in the area of ICT measurement to avoid duplication of efforts and maximize the usage of resources;

- There is an urgent need to step up the use of internationally agreed ICT indicators, such as those developed by the Partnership for Measuring ICT, for development in national statistical systems;

- The urgency for different national stakeholders to work together in compiling the necessary data for the 49 indicators on measuring the WSIS targets.

WSIS Forum 2013

- The Partnership on Measuring ICT for Development plays an important role in monitoring the progress that has been made in the global information society.

For further details please contact the WSIS Team at wsis-info@itu.int

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