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| **Logo, company name  Description automatically generated** | A close up of a sign  Description automatically generated**World Telecommunication DevelopmentConference (WTDC-22)****Kigali, Rwanda, 6-16 June 2022** |
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| PLENARY MEETING | **Document** **WTDC-22/INF/7-E** |
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| Director, Telecommunication Development Bureau |
| WSIS Forum 2022 Highlights, Announcements, and Key Outcomes, 30 May-3 June 2022 |

The WSIS Forum 2022 final week welcomed more than 1,000 physical participants, with more than 30,000 remote participants since 15 March.

Information and communication technology (ICT) experts and implementation actors contributed to and participated in the recent World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) Forum 2022 to foster partnerships, showcase innovation, exchange best practices and announce new tools and initiatives to use ICTs (WSIS Action Lines) to advance the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

For the last 20 years, WSIS Process and its components, specially the Forum has proven to be an efficient global multi-stakeholder platform that is open and inclusive for all to exchange knowledge and information, enhance collaborative networks, and to share best practices in the ICTs sector.

From 15 March we had over 250 sessions, including thematic workshops, country workshops, WSIS Action Line Facilitation meetings, high-level dialogues, high-level policy sessions, knowledge cafes and open-space talks enabled on-site as well as virtual participants from over 150 countries to engage with more than 500 high-level representatives of the wider WSIS Stakeholder community, including ministers and deputies, ambassadors; and leaders from the private sector, academia and civil society. Aligned with both WSIS Action Lines and the SDGs, this year's programme focused on highlighting the linkages between the two, including SDG priority areas such as indigenous languages, older persons, accessibility, education, youth inclusion, employment, gender empowerment, the environment, infrastructure and innovation. The forum provided a platform to celebrate the power of innovation through emerging technologies such as metaverse, AI, IoTs, blockchain, 5G and many others.

WSIS Forum 2022 was chaired by H.E. Professor Isa Ali Ibrahim (Pantami), Minister, Federal Ministry of Communications and Digital Economy, Nigeria. The Forum was co-organized by ITU, UNESCO, UNCTAD and UNDP, in close collaboration with all UN agencies involved. The Chariman proposed and agreed to continue his Chairmanship until next Forum. Chairman highlighted that he firmly believes that the 2025 WSIS Review process will be a critical global milestone and that we need to focus our attention to designing a review process that is thorough, inclusive and effective. "I am willing to invest my own time and effort in guiding this process" he said. He suggested that we form a high level expert group that will work towards designing this 2025 WSIS Review, also taking into account the guidance from the upcoming ITU plenipotentiary conference.

Digital technologies offer solutions to all these challenges. In these past 11 weeks, this year’s WSIS Forum has brought to life the many benefits of ICTs in areas as critical and diverse as education, health, financial inclusion, climate change, accessibility, cybersecurity, smart cities, and many more. Over the course of the week, we are going to have the opportunity to hear from and engage with some of the world’s foremost government, international organization, business, civil society and academic leaders about their hopes and expectations for the future of ICT, said ITU Secretary-General Houlin Zhao.

The final week witnessed the continued importance of the WSIS Process in charting the path for the implementation of the SDGs. There was wide-spread support amongst Ministers, Heads of Regulators, High level Policy Makers, CIvil SOciety, Private Sectors and Academia Representatives on the continued strengthening of the WSIS Process beyond 2025. The importance of designing a 2025 review process that is thorough inclusive and effective and which takes into account new developments in technology, policy and related processes was also emphasised by the WSIS Stakeholders.

The concrete outcomes of WSIS Forum 2022 will enable stakeholders to strengthen implementation of WSIS Action Lines and the alignment of the WSIS and SDG processes, and include among others:

* The UN Group on the Information Society (UNGIS) reiterated its commitment to the WSIS Process and Action Lines implementation and alignment of the WSIS and SDG processes, and a need to strengthen the visibility of UNGIS at the political level in Geneva and New York. UNGIS members concluded with a decision to prepare an action plan for the implementation of the UNGIS activities at the technical and political level for 2022-2023 and a decision to prepare an activity report for submission to the HLCP and CEB. UNGIS member agencies will also inform of opportunities to raise the visibility of UNGIS in the context of high-level intergovernmental meetings and discussions, and other UN and global discussions on priorities on digital for development issues and where digitalization is crucial for addressing global challenges. ITU was appointed as the UNGIS chair for the year 2022-2023, with the Vice-Chairs: UNCTAD, UNDP, UNESCO, UN ECA.
* UN Regional Commissions committed to strengthen regional-level WSIS action through multi-stakeholder platforms and a series of regional face-to-face meetings. **UN ECA was nominated and appointed as the WSIS Regional Commission Group Chair for the year 2022-2023.**
* **Ministerial Round Table** participants emphasized that the WSIS Action Lines are crucial for advancing the achievement of SDGs, hence, it is important to continue the alignment of the WSIS Process with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. 40 Ministers and Deputies highlighted the importance to integrate them in the agenda of the annual WSIS Forum, ensuring that the developing countries, including LDCs are not left behind in the fast-paced global landscape in ICTs. WSIS Forum is a good platform to provide recommendations on ICTs for Sustainable Development Issues and concluded that the Ministerial Round Table is a key component of the Forum and should be strengthened by cross-sectoral dialogues next year.
* **Ambassadors High Leve**l Briefing concluded that Ambassadors should be briefed regularly on the WSIS Process and its initiatives, including holding regular WSIS TalkX with Ambassadors. They highlighted the importance of the WSIS Process and requested the creation of a Climate Change as a special track in 2023. In addition, the ambassadors suggested that the output should be brought to attention of WTDC-22 by ITU Secratery General.
* ITU and UNESCO organized the [Hackathon on Indigenous Languages](https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2022/Home/Hackathon) with 691 participants with more than 75 countries. Three winners were announced during the WSIS Forum 2022 final week.
* The Forum also included the announcement of the [WSIS Prizes 2022 winners and champions](http://www.wsis.org/prizes), which represented all seven continents and all WSIS stakeholder groups. In addition, the winning entries of the WSIS Forum Photo Contest 2022 were unveiled, highlighting how ICTs are playing a vital, enabling role on the road to achieving the SDGs.
* ITU, in collaboration with GCOA awarded the [WSIS Health Ageing Innovation Prize 2022](https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2022/Home/HealthyAgeing) to HiNouNou - The open APP platform -Ecosystem centric to Older Adults to promote Healthy Longevity, China.
* [WSIS Gender Trendsetters 2022](https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2022/Home/ICTsGender) were appointed who submitted their pledges for action towards digital gender inclusion.

WSIS Forum 2022 was also an opportunity for partnerships to be forged and valuable tools and initiatives to be launched. The full list of Official WSIS Forum 2022 Outcomes and the below publications will be made available on the WSIS Forum 2022 website.

* WSIS Forum 2022: Outcome Document
* WSIS Forum 2022 High Level Track Outcomes and Executive Brief
* WSIS Action Lines Supporting Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (2022)
* WSIS Stocktaking Report 2022
* WSIS Forum 2022 and SDG Matrix
* WSIS Stocktaking Success Stories 2022
* WSIS Forum 2022: Report - WSIS Action Lines: Building back better from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) while advancing the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.”

WSIS Forum 2022 was made possible through the generous support of its strategic partners:

* UAE as the Platinum Partner
* Saudi Arabia as the Gold Plus Partner
* Qatar as the Gold Partner
* Japan, IEEE, Huawei as Partners for Specific Activities
* Rwanda, Switzerland, EY, and Internet Society as Contributing Partners
* United Kingdom, GCOA, and IFIP, as Supporting Partners

**Announcements of Partnerships**

* WSIS-SDG Metaverse Global Prize & VR competition 2023: in collaboration with Exponential Destiny;
* WSIS Special Prize: Healthy Ageing Innovation Prize 2023 in collaboration with ITU, WHO, UNDESA and Global Coalition on Aging (GCOA);
* WSIS Special Prize: Indigenous Languages Prizes 2023;
* In collaboration with ITU, Geneva Cities Hub, City of Geneva, the Mayors Round Table and multistakeholder dialogue with Mayors, Chief of Villages, and Community Leaders are to be continued and strengthened in 2023;
* 1st ever Academic Round Table was organized that resulted in the creation of a WSIS Special track focussed on Academia, Research Exchange, Involving Academic community in digital cross sectoral projects;
* In collaboration with WHO, ITU and UNESCO launch of Misinformation: Digital Marketing of Harmful Products to Children;
* In collaboration with the UN Technology Bank for LDC, ITU and WHO: safe listening;
* Qatar trainings on Digital Accessibility;
* WSIS Multistakeholder Alliance on ICTs and Older persons:
	+ Awareness building on the opportunities and challenges of ICTs for Older Persons;
	+ Intergenerational working groups with enterprises, in collaboration with CSEND;
* WSIS Gender Trendsetters
	+ Engagements with Parliamentarians: Protection of Women Parliamentarians in the cyber space: incollaboration with H.E. Neema Parliamentarian, Tanzania;
	+ Creation of Gender Index for measuring Gender Inequality;
	+ **WSIS Gender Repository Trainings:** In collaboration with Vision Empower, trainings will be organised for the following:
1. Sensitization programme for women and girls to raise awareness about the crucial role of Technology in the lives of visually-impaired people (4 quarterly workshops);
2. Training workshops for educators/caregivers working and/or willing to work with visually-impaired people (2 half-yearly programme).

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