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## Draft action plan

### Based on discussions in the Working Group of Sub-Committee 2

(WSIS/PC-2/DT-3 revised)

*[NOTE: The whole text is in square brackets]*

## Section I

1. The Information Society is an evolving concept, the realization of which is driven by all societies—and in this process all of them can learn from each other. At present, the Information Society has reached different levels of development across the regions and countries of the world. As such, it would be necessary and more effective to design a flexible Action Plan that can be used as a reference framework and as a source of guidance and inspiration at regional and national levels, and that is established in accordance with the Millennium Declaration Goals.

### *A. List of issues*

- 1) **Information and communication infrastructure: financing and investment, affordability, development and sustainability**
2. **Bridging the digital divide:** Our countries are committed to taking action to overcome the digital divide, which reflects and is a factor in the differences that exist between and within countries in terms of economic, social and cultural aspects, education, health and access to knowledge.
3. **Universal access:** In order to achieve affordable and universal access in basic services it is essential:
  - To utilize existing and new technologies to provide connectivity to all.
  - To develop connectivity for institutions accessible to the public such as schools, libraries, post offices, etc.
  - To study and promote relevant solutions adapted to the environment for ICTs in remote and rural areas.
  - To establish multi-purpose community access points to ensure inclusive access to information and social services, particularly in rural areas.

- To evolve the concept of universal access/service to reflect advances and opportunities offered by technology, existing infrastructures, market development and changes in user demand.
4. **Broadband:** It is essential to strengthen regional and international broadband network infrastructure in order to provide the capacity to match the needs of countries and their citizens and for the delivery of new services.
  5. **Low cost equipment:** The creation and provision of low-cost access equipment shall be an integral part of the agenda for reducing the digital divide.
  6. **Low cost connectivity:** Universal access policies shall promote the best possible level of connectivity at a reasonable cost for under-served areas. In particular, unused satellite capacity should be used to improve low cost connectivity in developing countries.
  7. **Convergence:** Technological convergence must be monitored with a view to integrating traditional and new ICTs in order to create alternative forms of access that can help narrow the digital divide.
  8. **Interconnection:** The optimization of connections among major information networks should be promoted through the creation of regional traffic hubs to reduce interconnection costs and allow the penetration of access networks to be broadened.
  9. **Interconnection fees:** Interconnection fees for the use of networks and infrastructure shall be set on the basis of objective, non-discriminatory and market-led parameters.
  10. **Regional infrastructure:** Regional ICT backbones and exchange points should be implemented to facilitate traffic exchange between countries.
  11. **Environmental protection:** Governments and the business community must initiate actions as well as develop and implement programmes and projects for the environmentally safe disposal (including recycling) of discarded ICT hardware and parts.

## 2) Access to information and knowledge

12. Individuals and organizations should benefit from enhanced access to knowledge and information.
13. **Access to public domain information:** Information in the public domain should be of high quality, easily accessible for all, including the disabled.
14. **Open standards and open-source software:** Development and deployment of open-source software and standards for ICT networking should be encouraged:
  - Open and flexible international and interoperable standards should be promoted to ensure that all can utilize the technology and associated content and services to their maximum potential.
  - Open-source software, including UNESCO software CDS/ISIS, multi-platform and open platform as well as interoperability standards, should be used more broadly to provide freedom of choice and to facilitate access to ICTs by all citizens, at an affordable cost.
  - Standardization efforts in the field of terminology and other language resources should be intensified.
15. **Information flows:** Guidelines on Internet contracts should be established and existing contracts for Internet traffic renegotiated.

## 3) The role of governments, the business sector and civil society in the promotion of ICTs for development

16. The full and effective involvement of all stakeholders is vital in developing new ICT applications. The role, responsibilities and goals of each stakeholder should be clearly defined.
17. **Cooperation among Stakeholders:** Increased cooperation and partnerships are needed between governmental and intergovernmental organizations, the private sector, civil society and the media, for effective design and implementation of various initiatives, giving priority to locally-available human resources:

- The public sector should explore innovative ways to correct market failures and foster competition to bring the Information Society to all sectors of the economy and society, especially those living in poverty.
- The private sector should play an important role in the development and diffusion of ICTs.
- Civil society, including NGOs, should work closely with communities in strengthening ICT-related initiatives.
- Mass media – in their various forms – are recognized as important means of fostering public information, societal development and social cohesion.
- International and regional organizations, including financial and development institutions should play an important role in integrating the use of ICTs in the development process and making available the necessary resources.
- International organization should be mandated to mainstream ICTs in their work programmes and asked to prepare action plans to support the fulfillment of the goals indicated in the declaration of principles and in this action plan.

18. **Resource mobilization:** All stakeholders are urged to mobilize resources for the development of the Information Society. This could include:

- increasing investment in telecommunication infrastructure,
- building human capacity,
- developing policy frameworks,
- developing culturally sensitive local content and applications.

19. **ICT manufacturing capabilities:** It is essential for governments to encourage technology transfer and investment, including venture capital, in the creation of national and regional ICT production facilities:

- Priority shall be placed on strengthening local micro-enterprises and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) through their integration into the digital economy. Partnership mechanisms and business models should be developed for fostering clustering and partnership between SMEs in developing countries and industrialized countries.
- Public policies must foster innovation and entrepreneurship.
- The development of technology-based firms should be encouraged through venture capital funds, technology parks and business incubators, franchising IT clubs, together with the participation of academic institutions and research networks.
- Joint stakeholder efforts to address local obstacles and seek sustainable solutions for infrastructure in underprivileged areas should be encouraged.
- Governments should implement targeted monetary and fiscal policies to support the development of SMEs in the ICT sector (for instance, by relaxing duties and import taxes, and by initiating investment funds).

#### **4) Capacity building: human resources development, education, and training**

20. An ambitious and innovative approach is required in capacity building, taking advantage of the opportunities offered by ICTs.

21. **ICTs in education:** The use of ICTs could contribute to more efficiency and better quality in education services. They should also contribute to reaching broad target groups:

- Information regarding the potential of new technologies in education should be disseminated through exchange of information on best practices, awareness campaigns, pilot projects, demonstrations and public discussions.
- ICTs should be incorporated in school curricula.
- ICTs should be used to train trainers and to ensure better delivery of education at all levels, including outside the educational structure, at the workplace and in the home.

- Teacher's skills and curriculum resources need increased support so that teachers can act as a gateway to the Information Society.
- There should be a large-scale integration of ICTs in primary education to generate a dynamic process towards e-literacy.
- The capacity of developing and least developed countries to apply ICTs effectively in education must be enhanced through regional and international cooperation.

**22. Capacity building for ICT use:** People must have enhanced levels of ICT literacy and ICT skills to make the best use of the Information Society:

- Relevant education and training should be promoted at every level, from primary to adult, to open up opportunities for as many people as possible, and especially the disadvantaged.
- Women should be given equal opportunities for obtaining training in the ICT field.
- Young people should be equipped with knowledge and skills in ICTs to prepare them for full participation in the Information Society.
- E-literacy courses should be aimed at training the population in the use of ICTs with a view to producing useful and socially meaningful content for the benefit of all.
- Intergovernmental organizations should provide resources for capacity building in ICTs.
- All those still outside the reach of the formal education system should be offered education and information tailored to their need and culture.
- Community media should be used in capacity building programmes.

**23. Training ICT specialists:** Basic and advanced education should be improved to help create a critical mass of highly qualified and skilled ICT professionals and experts:

- Education in network infrastructure development and operation is critical for the availability of efficient, reliable, competitive and secure ICT network services.
- The formation and maintenance of a workforce to act as a pillar of the Information Society shall be undertaken in close cooperation with the private sector and civil society in general.
- South to North brain drain should be prevented, in particular through the creation by governments of an adequate environment to keep trained people.

## 5) Security

**24. Secure and reliable infrastructure:** The security of networks has emerged as one of the critical issues for the continued growth of electronic commerce and the use of the new technologies more generally:

- All stakeholders concerned with ICT issues should take the necessary steps to enhance security, user confidence and other aspects of information and system/network integrity in order to avoid the risk of wholesale disruption and destruction of the network systems on which they are increasingly dependent.
- This will require appropriate national legislative frameworks that safeguard the public and general interest and that foster electronic communications and transactions.
- It will also require raising awareness of information security issues, and the rapidly evolving complexity, capacity and reach of information technology, the anonymity offered by these technologies, and the trans-national nature of communication frameworks.
- Special mechanisms shall be put in place to encourage the banking sector to develop secure and reliable applications to facilitate online transactions.

**25. Information Security:** Effective information security could be guaranteed not only by technology, but also by education and training, policy and law, and international cooperation. The United Nations should be supported in its efforts aimed at:

- Assessing the information security situation, including harmful interference or abuse using information and communication systems and information resources.

- Developing methods for protection and creating a rapid reaction organization to deal with security violations, as well as exchanging information and technology to combat violations.
- Studying the long-term possibility of creating an international convention on the security of information and communication networks.

Recognizing the principle of fair, equitable and appropriate access to ICTs for all countries, special attention should be paid to the fact that ICTs can potentially be used for purposes that are inconsistent with the objectives of maintaining international stability and security, and may adversely affect the integrity of the infrastructure within States, to the detriment of their security in both civil and military fields.

- 26. Creating a global culture of cyber-security:** In the long term, a “global culture of cyber-security”, should be developed, based on a common understanding of regulations and appropriate mechanisms for information and technology exchange and international cooperation. It is important to strike the right balance between measures to enhance security and the need to ensure the protection of data and privacy as well as to avoid the creation of new barriers to trade. Due attention should be given to the principle of technological neutrality.
- 27. Fighting cybercrime:** Protection from civil and criminal offences (“cybercrime”) is essential in order to build trust in information networks:
- A multi-pronged approach is needed to tackle cybercrime, on all fronts, with emphasis on preventive approaches, national guidelines and regional and international cooperation. At the same time, action to address cybercrime and to ensure a safe and secure Information Society must respect the sovereignty of nations and maintain respect for the constitutional and other rights of all persons, including freedom of expression.
  - Existing legal instruments, such as the *Council of Europe Convention on Cybercrime*, offer the international community a foundation from which to build.

## 6) Enabling environment

- 28. Good governance:** 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, thus favouring the necessary investments, mainly from the private sector, in the deployment of infrastructures and development of new services:
- Commitment and responsibility should be defined at the national and regional levels.
  - With the active participation of all stakeholders, the development of an enabling environment should give due regard to the rights and obligations of all stakeholders in such areas as freedom of expression, consumer protection, privacy, security, intellectual property rights, open-source solutions and management of Internet addresses and domain names, while also maintaining economic incentives and ensuring trust and confidence for business activities.
- 29. Market environment:** The availability of telecommunication infrastructures and affordable telecommunications services and ICT equipment are prerequisites for accessing and using ICTs for all:
- Competition, including in the local access network, should be promoted to drive down prices and to ensure the ongoing modernization of networks and services.
  - Investment in rural communications should be encouraged through an attractive legal framework.
  - Duties levied on ICT hardware and software should be removed.
  - Monopoly in mass communication should be avoided and diversity in the sources of information should be promoted.
  - In order to secure prompt settlement of disputes, alternative dispute resolution (ADR) should be considered along with normal judicial proceedings.
- 30. Standardization:** The development of the Information Society must be based on platforms of internationally interoperable technical standards, accessible for all, and technological innovation of ICTs,

as well as systems to promote the exchange of knowledge at global, regional and sub-regional levels, through any media.

31. **Spectrum management:** 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 international agreements governing the management of frequencies.
32. **Consumer protection:** There is a real consumer fear concerning the loss of privacy as well as in relation to the fight against illegal and harmful content and the protection of minors. Assurance of the confidentiality of personal information is essential in building the Information Society.
33. **Internet governance:** A transparent and democratic governance of the Internet shall constitute the basis for the development of a global culture of cyber-security. An [international][intergovernmental] organisation should ensure multilateral, democratic and transparent management of root servers, domain names and Internet Protocol (IP) address assignment.
34. **Intellectual property rights:** It is important to ensure a balance between intellectual property rights (IPR) and the public interest:
  - While IPRs play a vital role in fostering innovation in software, e-commerce and associated trade and investment, there is a need to promote initiatives to ensure fair balance between IPRs and the interests of the users of information, while also taking into consideration the global consensus achieved on IPR issues in multilateral organizations.
  - An appropriate legal framework should be defined for the development of a public domain of information and knowledge.
  - Protection against unfair use of indigenous knowledge should be developed.

#### **7) Promotion of development-oriented ICT applications for all**

35. ICTs can support social and economic development. But it is also important to ensure that traditional models are recognized and respected, so that the non-users of ICTs are not marginalized. The following examples are intended to illustrate the potential for this.
36. **E-Government:** Public administrations should use ICT tools to enhance transparency, accountability and efficiency—at all levels of government, and in particular at the local level:
  - In the delivery of public services to citizens and to enterprises.
  - In the design of online services, adapted to the needs of citizens and businesses.
  - In the better management of financial, human and public resources and goods.
37. **E-Business:** Enterprises, particularly SMEs, can use ICTs to foster innovation, realize gains in productivity, fight against poverty, reduce transaction costs and benefit from network externalities:
  - Through the adoption of an enabling environment and based on a widely-available broadband infrastructure, Governments should seek to stimulate private investment, new applications and content development and foster public - private partnerships.
  - Governments should adopt a twofold approach: setting the rules and using e-Business in their interaction with the business community.
  - ICTs can be used to bring consumer benefits and satisfaction by widening the choice of potential suppliers, beyond the constraints of location. The private sector should help to raise awareness and to ensure training on the specific issues related to e-Business.
  - Use of digital technologies can enhance the role of enterprises in promoting entrepreneurship, liberalizing trade, the accumulation of knowledge, the upgrading of skills, thereby increasing productivity, incomes and jobs and promoting qualitative improvement of working life.
38. **E-learning:** Access to education and knowledge is essential for economic, social and cultural development, and as a means of personal empowerment, community development and business efficiency. Without neglecting traditional literacy, ICT networks have the potential to offer new educational opportunities to all groups in all areas, and a wider delivery of education:

- E-Learning should contribute to achieving universal primary education worldwide through better delivery of education and better training of teachers, and to offer improved conditions for lifelong learning, encompassing people that are outside the “normal” education process, and for improving professional skills.
  - Implementation of affordable and universal educational programmes, content, broadband networks and hardware should be promoted.
  - The introduction and development of ICTs in various schools and other learning institutions shall be supported through the establishment and maintenance of a human resources network that institutionalizes the ongoing training of teachers and instructors, who are the backbone of innovation.
  - Advantage shall be taken of best practices to create high-quality, readily accessible teaching material from all over the world to facilitate knowledge transfer to the national level.
  - Special attention shall be devoted to multilingual training and to the use and development of translation software.
39. **E-health:** Access to healthcare information and services is a basic right. Many countries lack adequate healthcare facilities and personnel, particularly in rural and remote areas. ICTs should be incorporated on a mass scale in the field of health care with a view to improving resource use, patient satisfaction, personalized care, and the coordination of public health-care systems, private institutions and the academic sector:
- ICTs should be used to promote social inclusion of all members of society by enabling equitable access to healthcare services, as well as empowering citizens to better manage their own health and to participate more effectively in the healthcare process.
  - Innovative solutions and options must be devised for providing health services to under-served areas.
  - Another e-health priority shall be the prevention, treatment and monitor and control of the spread of dangerous and contagious diseases—specifically HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria—in particular, through the creation of a common information system.
  - ICTs can be used to provide e-health supports to specific groups (such as the elderly, the chronically ill and children).
  - An ICT-based e-health network should be established to provide medical assistance following humanitarian disaster and emergencies.
  - A system should be established to provide e-health services to the populations in remote regions of the globe.
40. **E-employment:** ICTs can provide tools for new job creation and enhance competitiveness and productivity through teleworking, enterprise networking and efficient linking of job seekers and employers. Best practices and new labour laws for e-workers and e-employers should be developed at the international level. The role of the ILO is fundamental in this respect. Telecommuting should be promoted to allow the best brains of the developing world to live in their societies and work anywhere.
41. **E-environment:** Systems should be established to prevent man-made disasters, using ICTs to monitor the operators of production and transport systems that pose the gravest potential threats to the environment.

## **8) Cultural identity and linguistic diversity, local content and media development**

42. **Cultural and linguistic diversity.** Linguistic and cultural diversity enriches the development of society by giving expression to a range of different values and ideas. For this purpose:
- Information should be presented in the language and cultural context most familiar to the user, thereby further encouraging the use of ICTs.
  - To foster mutual understanding, diversity of cultural expression should be preserved and promoted, through the creation of varied information content and the digitization of the educational, scientific and cultural heritage.

- ICTs should be used to help preserve diversity and indigenous knowledge and traditions.
- Means should be developed for enabling access to information resources in different languages, in particular online translation tools.
- Means should be developed for processing information in local languages: for instance, standard character sets and language codes, dictionaries, general and application software.
- Non-written languages should be preserved by using audio support.

43. **Content:** Creation of local content should be supported:

- Public policy should foster the creation of varied information content, which helps to preserve and disseminate local and national culture, language and heritage, and to safeguard family and community cohesion.
- Production and exchange of appropriate local content available in a user's mother tongue is of vital importance.
- Developing countries must have the capacity for developing hardware and software, as well as content that is relevant to different segments of population.
- Content referencing, based on public-private partnership to make web content more accessible, should be encouraged.
- Local authorities have an important role to play, because for citizens they represent the first level of contact with the administrations and they could also foster the development of local communities: local content development, digital archives, diverse forms of digital media, content translation and adaptation should be supported.
- Literacy software should be produced in local languages.
- Archives should be preserved as the memory of humankind, and systems should be developed to ensure continued access to archived digital information and multimedia content.
- Libraries and archives should be supported as content providers.

44. **Media:** ICT and media as a whole should stimulate linguistic and cultural diversity, including through the facilitation of exchange of local content:

- Investment should be made in regional media content as well as new technologies.
- Independent production and pluralistic media should be supported.
- Appropriate multilateral television networks should be promoted.

**9) Identifying and overcoming barriers to the achievement of the Information Society with a human perspective**

***B. Objectives***

45. Examples of possible concrete and comprehensive actions could include:

a) **Benchmarks:** The following could serve as benchmarks for actions to be taken:

- all villages to be connected by 2010, with a community access point by 2015;
- all universities to be connected by 2005, all secondary schools by 2010 and all primary schools by 2015;
- all hospitals to be connected by 2005 and health centres by 2010;
- 90 per cent of the world's population to be within wireless coverage by 2010 and 100 per cent by 2015;
- all central governments departments to have a website and email address by 2005 and all local governments departments by 2010.

b) **E-Strategies:** Developing national e-strategies for all countries within three years, including the necessary human capacity building.

c) **Global Digital Compact:** Launching of 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.) (*a model that could start from the institutional relationships already existing in ITU, with ITU as coordinator*).

d) **Digital development index:** Launching and gradually developing an aggregate ICT Development (Digital Opportunity) Index and publish it annually or every two years in an ICT Development Report, where ranking of countries will be accompanied by analytical work on policies and their implementation. (*ITU is to catalyze and combine in a coherent structure the existing experiences in various organizations, universities, think-tanks etc.*)

e) **Handbook on good practices and success stories:** Elaborating and launching a “Handbook on good practices and success stories”, as a compilation of contributions from all stakeholders, in a concise and convincing format, which is to be re-issued periodically and turned into a permanent experience-sharing exercise.

f) **Training content workers:** Equipping and training content workers in the LDCs, such as archivists, librarians, scientists, teachers and journalists in making use of the expertise and operational capacity of the relevant international professional organizations.

g) **Curriculum revision:** Revising the curricula of the primary and secondary schools in all countries, within three years, in order to meet the challenges of the Information Society.

h) **World languages on the Internet:** Create the necessary technical (software and hardware) conditions, which would permit all languages in the world to be present and used on the Internet.

### ***C. Strategies programmes, methods for implementation***

46. Governments, the private sector, civil society, the media and multilateral organizations all have a role in the evolution towards an Information Society.

47. **Governments** in particular have a role in setting 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. This should include:

- Establishing regulatory frameworks.
- Renewing models for public action and actively shaping the transformation towards an Information Society.
- Preparing the future generation for the Information Society, and creating an environment of continuous learning.
- Ensuring the full ownership by all stakeholders of the e-Strategies that are elaborated.

48. **Private sector** involvement is crucial for a sound and sustainable development of infrastructures, content and application.

- The private sector is not only a market player but plays a role in a wider political and social context, i.e. helping countries to develop ICTs and overcome the digital divide.
- The private sector can be involved in practical partnerships for innovative applications, for instance, in e-Government initiatives.

49. **Civil society** involvement is crucial for creating an equitable Information Society, based on sustainable economic and social development and gender justice:

- Civil society involvement is vital in the take-up and social acceptance of the Information Society.

- Civil society can help to strengthen the value aspect in the triangle of regulation, markets and values.
50. **Mass media** – in their various forms – are recognized as essential requirement for freedom of expression and a guarantee of the plurality of information:
- The media provide an important means of fostering public information, societal development and social cohesion.
51. **Multilateral organizations** have a key role in providing guidance, facilitating peer dialogue, exchange of experience and best practices, offering technical assistance in the design of e-Strategies and, in some cases, complementing the role of governments and other actors.
52. **Performance monitoring:** To be effective, beyond the identification of goals, the strategies should include timeframes, indicators and mechanisms for monitoring performance based not only on quantitative but also qualitative criteria. In the case of smaller countries, regional strategies can contribute to the emergence of larger markets, offering more attractive conditions for private sector investment as well as for a competitive environment. Furthermore ICTs could be of particular relevance in the development context, because they offer opportunities to Public Administrations, help attract private investments and allow for leapfrogging using new and advanced technologies.
53. **Specific initiatives:** The development of a strategy entails understanding what to promote, where to promote it, and how to tailor and implement activities to achieve maximum impact. This should capitalize on existing national, regional and global efforts. Specific initiatives could include:
- Promoting long-term government spending on R&D and higher education, with the aim of mastering and adapting specific ICT solutions.
  - Providing incentives and regulatory schemes that would enhance private sector capabilities in terms of human resource development, infrastructure and institution building.
  - Providing tax incentives for start up ICT companies.
  - Fostering the scale-up of locally successful ICT-related projects dealing with priority applications like health and education programmes.
  - Focusing part of the R&D programmes on low purchasing power markets, including research on appropriate technologies and innovative marketing and distribution mechanisms, including the taking advantage of the diasporas.
  - Creating a network of IT consultants.
  - Developing a platform for showcasing applications.

#### ***D. International cooperation and financing***

54. **International cooperation.** 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 shall be taken of the opportunities offered by regional financial institutions and the UN Regional Commissions.
  - Encouraging entrepreneurship is an important goal. For this, it is necessary to establish certain basic structures, e.g. conducive regulatory frameworks and access to market information for businesses.
  - Encouraging cyber-volunteer programmes, notably in relation to NGOs, activities regarding basic ICT training to marginalized groups, or in relation to specific ICT applications.
  - Fostering a cumulative knowledge process by systematic networking between grassroots initiatives, by creation of websites, by facilitating exchange of information and experience, and through dissemination of good practices.
55. **Financing:** 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:

- It is proposed to 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 developed countries to create their ICT infrastructure.
  - This could include a commitment by the private sector to provide ICT goods and services at preferential conditions for specific categories of users, notably not-for-profit organizations directly involved in poverty alleviation.
  - Developed countries should make available the official development assistance (ODA) commitments that they announced at the International Conference on Financing for Development. All countries should comply with all aspects of the consensus reached at that conference.
  - Developed countries that have not already done so should take concrete action to fulfill the target level of 0.7 per cent of their Gross Domestic Product as ODA.
  - The unsustainable debt burden should be reduced through such actions as debt relief, debt cancellation and other innovative mechanisms geared to addressing the debt problem of developing countries, in particular the poorest and the most heavily indebted ones.
56. **Technology transfer:** It is important to facilitate access, and to transfer knowledge and technology 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.

### ***E. Follow up***

57. **Indicators:** A realistic international monitoring and benchmarking (both qualitative and quantitative) exercise, through comparable statistical indicators, should be developed to follow up the implementation of the action plan and to evaluate progress towards well identified goals, in particular progress toward the Information Society. Indicators and periodic reports may also provide a basis for benchmarking, peer reviews and contribute to the dissemination of best practices.
58. **Reporting:** International organizations and UN specialized agencies, particularly ITU, shall assess and report regularly on universal accessibility of ICTs and possible cases of discrimination. They shall also ensure non-discrimination 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.
59. **Support for implementation:** Organizations of the UN family should support countries in the follow up on the agreements adopted in this declaration and action plan.

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## Section II

### Observers' contribution to the draft Action Plan\*

[1] The Information Society is an evolving concept which encompasses the traditional media of press, radio and television as well as the new media brought into being through advances in ICTs.

#### A. List of issues

##### 1) Information and communication infrastructure: financing and investment, affordability, development and sustainability

[2] *Add* employment *after* cultural aspects.

[3] Universal access: In order to achieve affordable and universal access to the Information Society, including the traditional media, in basic services, the following are essential:

- Designing national network infrastructure;
- Developing infrastructure for radio and television coverage
- Adoption of a combination of infrastructure technologies for building IP-Public Data Networks, and Intelligent Networks;
- Mobilization of renewable and decentralized energy sources as a pre requisite for universal access to network infrastructures. Particular attention must be given to rural and isolated communities;
- Development of technology systems that are appropriate to local environments to effectively bridge the digital divide, for example community radio, local newsletters, and other forms of community and non-profit media shall be privileged.
- Support and encourage research programmes to design, develop and adapt ICT infrastructure, tools and application that are responsive to the needs of the poor, especially non-literate women.

[7] To reduce large investment and operation costs, a common use of infrastructure is recommended for both telecommunication and radio/TV information transport and distribution.

[9] Equitable tariff and quota structures for telecommunication services (backbone, local access, telecommunication) should be created.

[10] Regional infrastructure:

- It is imperative for Africa to rehabilitate and develop the existing PANAFTTEL network, and where necessary, complete it with new backbones to create extensive African Interconnection Network (AIN). This network should be completed by International/Intercontinental access points to the global telecommunications network. On the other hand, remote regions that are too distant from terrestrial networks should have priority access to the satellite services, particularly the RASCOM African satellite.
- Regarding IP traffic, which is rapidly growing in the short term, a " Gateway Internet Exchange " (GIX) network must be designed at the regional level as a priority, in order to keep intra-African IP traffic within the continent, with the dual goals of fully leveraging the AIN network and of reducing the volume of inter-continental traffic.

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\* Paragraph numbers correspond to those of Section 1 of this document. Where new issues are raised by observers' comments these are added with a number associated to a letter (e.g. 12 A, B, etc.)

**2) Access to information and knowledge**

[12] Promote and guarantee access for all, starting from the community level.

[12] Scientific information should be available, or at least indexed, within a multilingual context.

[12 A] Open Access. Need to encourage:

- Creation of content models whereby content in digital format is freely available, while paper-printed versions or CD burned versions may be sold by institutional or commercial channels.
- Publishers to develop Open Access business models, whether these models are commercial or not-for-profit.
- Creation by scientists of not-for-profit Open Access Journals and authors to submit their papers to Open Access Journals.
- Existing subscription-based journals to turn to Open Access models.
- Authors to write Open Access books and multimedia material for research and education.
- Authors to maintain a personal web page whereby all their research findings and reports are freely available.
- Creation of institutional Open Archives at the national and international level.
- Establishment of a programme funded by the UN (or its agencies) to:
  - Create a worldwide portal to Open Access journals and Open Access books.
  - Ensure financial support to not-for-profit Open Access Journals.
  - Create a worldwide scientific Open Archive.
  - Distribute free CDs containing Open Access contents to transition countries.
  - Provide financial support to the creation and maintenance of institutional Open Access archives.
- Encourage the creation and maintenance of mirror sites of Open Access contents in institutions belonging to transition countries, in order to save Internet connection costs.
- Recommend that Member states should adopt national legislation making it compulsory for scientists to deposit their published works in a national or a UN funded world-wide Open Access archive.
- Recommend that Member states should adopt national regulations making it compulsory for scientists whose research is funded by public agencies or by private foundations to publish in Open Access journals.

[12 B] Development of vocal and tactile e-applications.

[12 C] The traditional media will play an important role both in promoting understanding of ICTs and in providing content for the new media. Increased cooperation and partnerships are needed between governmental and intergovernmental organizations, broadcasters, the private sector and civil society, for effective design and implementation of various initiatives, by giving priority to locally-available human resources.

[13] Access to public domain information. Need to encourage:

- Provision for increased access to ICTs and integration into programmes that assist with poverty alleviation and the empowerment of women and men.
- Web pages of all public bodies should be fully accessible from any kind of browser, including free software browser, and should follow accessibility guidelines.
- Awareness among civil society at large for the need to support an independent, open-access public domain.

[14] Open-source/free software shall be adopted by all public authorities and bodies:

- Awareness of open-source/free software should be created, especially in the developing countries.
- Capacity in open-source/free software development should be built through the development of incubator funding, a knowledge warehouse of expertise in developing countries, development of regional and national open-source/free software portals, and by ensuring that technical experts in developing countries have full opportunity to participate in the development of open-source/free software.
- 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.
- A collaborative network of open-source/free software technology tools for civil society must be promoted.

### **3) The role of governments, the business sector and civil society in the promotion of ICTs for development**

**[17] Cooperation among Stakeholders:** Promote corporate or employee volunteering initiatives on ICTs for development to facilitate for the private sector to share skills, expertise and resources, in order to harness them in a constructive way in ICTs for development initiatives.

The civil society must:

- Develop projects to disseminate digital culture among all social categories, with a priority focus on the handicapped.
- Be fully involved in the formulation and implementation of ICTs and sustainable development strategies.
- Develop projects that promote dialogue within and between civilizations via electronic networks.
- Establish associative networks and linkages between NGOs.
- Help to develop distance-learning programmes.
- Promote the value of partnership with representatives of the trade union movement at all levels (international, regional, national, local, and enterprise level) in working to bridge the digital divide. Trade unions are both an important sector of civil society, and a core element of global industry. Labour, together with civil society, business and governments have to create a common movement to overcome the social and the digital divide.

National government and local authorities must:

- Promote and facilitate infrastructure building, provide training, and create an enabling environment for ICT to be accessible for all, but they should not play the role of regulators of information flow and content.
- Prioritize and promote local ICT initiatives to service local, national and regional communities.
- Reaffirm the role of a more transparent, participatory, and effective democratic UN system as a truly legitimate forum for global governance.
- Recommit to principles of open, transparent, decentralised and accountable governance mechanisms at all levels, from the local to global, and in all spheres of society, including those related to the governance of information and communication systems.
- Promote further research programmes on issues related to the goals approved by the United Nations Millennium Assembly especially in the developing countries.
- Engage indigenous people as active in the Information Society through multiple stakeholder intergenerational partnerships.

**[18]** *add* broadcasting *after* infrastructure

**[19] ICT manufacturing capabilities:** Developing programmes to foster entrepreneurship including the uptake of ICT by SMEs with the objective being to enable efficient business practices and further promote universal access to ICTs and the Information Society.

#### **4) Capacity building: human resources development, education, and training**

**[21] ICTs in education:** Need to:

- Develop and improve the capacities of local teacher and researchers organisations by providing ICT training facilities in teacher training and research institutions, with particular emphasis on developing countries.
- Develop affordable solutions in terms of hardware and software tailored to the needs of all educational levels and to local conditions while promoting the combination of various media, both traditional and new.
- Increase the resource allocation of governments to programmes targeting the elimination of illiteracy, innumeracy and other learning challenges that impede the ability of marginalized sectors of society from fully accessing information necessary for their well-being.
- Use ICT to increase women's economic literacy and their economic empowerment and participation.

**[21]** Like the press, radio and television, and in partnership with those media, ICTs can contribute to enhancing the quality of teaching and learning, and the sharing of knowledge and information.

**[22] Capacity building for ICT use:** People must have enhanced levels of ICT literacy and ICT skills to make the best use of the Information Society:

- Education systems and skills development programs for all segments of society should be created with the objective being that populations have the skills necessary to reap the benefits of the Information Society, including the use of ICT for education.
- Youth can provide skills and commitment through volunteer and community initiatives to use ICTs towards attaining the Millennium Development Goals.
- Computer literacy and education for all are vital elements of the Information Society. Access to information can only be meaningful if illiteracy is eradicated. At the same time the Information Society must enhance the provision of quality education through lifelong learning (primary, secondary, tertiary education, in-service education and other forms of education), which provides for the ability to critically assess and evaluate information.
- Ensure that women are not disproportionately disadvantaged by the working conditions and organizational climate common within the global ICT industry, such as "flexible" employment practices.
- Support training initiatives in information management and production skills for grass roots organisations in developing countries.
- Implementation of measures to ensure women's equal access to ICT education, training and literacy by: Integrating ICT education in school curricula based on gender equality; Realizing girls' full participation in science and technology education; Developing relevant distance ICT education and training programmes, especially for rural women and girls.

**[23] Training ICT specialists:** Need to:

- Develop and provide resources for ICT skills enhancement programmes in technical colleges and in particular professional academies with full involvement of the teaching staff and directors. This action should replace commercially-based joint venture programmes with multinational corporations that provide narrow training focussed on their company's products.
- Promote engineering knowledge transfer towards domestic capacity building in developing countries, as well as local engineering capacities to develop local knowledge and needs.

## 5) Security

[24] Adoption of any security-related policy should be the result of prior multi-stakeholder consultations, including civil society and users/consumers as well as business and government.

[25] 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.

[25] International cooperation should be developed to fight all forms of the surveillance and monitoring system infringing upon the values of human rights and democracy.

[25 A] **Privacy:** Need to:

- Secure technical experts to protect against illegal monitoring of private information held by civil society.
- Create awareness on the necessity of privacy protection through educational programmes conducted by governments, international organizations and civil society.
- Create an independent mechanism such as a "Privacy Protection Committee" to supervise, monitor and arbitrate privacy infringement in the Global Information Society.
- Privacy security studies should be carried on for all main emerging new technologies, such as IPV6 (Internet Protocol version 6).
- National compulsory projects using ICTs, such as electronic national ID card initiatives and electronic health care card initiatives, should be prudently assessed, with consideration of privacy issues.
- Databases of information on individuals, which have been established by governments, such as health insurance databases, should be reviewed on the basis of securing human rights and democracy.
- Uniform legal protection of communications privacy is needed to avoid interference and monitoring of Internet traffic and personal communications. For exceptional cases at the workplace, regulations and collectively negotiated agreements are required to determine who can carry out the monitoring and under which conditions.

[26] Promoting appropriate information sharing about security issues, with the objective being the enhancement of secure and reliable networks including actions, such as:

- Working to develop a culture of security.
- Preventing Cybercrime and enforcing laws related to it.
- Facilitating information sharing and analysis centres around the world.

## 6) Enabling environment

[28] **Good governance:** With the active participation of all stakeholders, the development of an enabling environment should give due regard to the rights and obligations of all stakeholders in such areas as freedom of expression, consumer protection, privacy, security, intellectual property rights, labour standards, open-source solutions, management of Internet addresses and domain names while also maintaining economic incentives and ensuring trust and confidence for business activities.

[28] Develop gender-sensitive technical and regulatory instruments when addressing ICT policy issues such as universal access, regulatory frameworks, licensing, setting tariffs, spectrum allocation, infrastructure, ICT industry development and labour policies.

[29] **Market environment:** The creation of a transparent and predictable legal and regulatory environments, with the objective to promote competition and investment in ICT infrastructure and applications, should include actions such as:

- Promoting competition in the underlying infrastructure.
- Removing legal obstacles to e-commerce.
- Recognizing electronic signatures and contracts.
- Ensuring a neutral and non-discriminatory tax regime.
- Ensuring transparent processes for policy development.

[29] Competition is only one out of many ways to drive down prices and to ensure the ongoing modernization of networks and services.

[29] The core data, infrastructure and systems supporting ICT services should not be transferred out of the hands of democratically accountable agencies into the hands of an unaccountable private sector. Open technical standards, including through the open-source software movement, can help ensure that this does not happen.

[29] Implementing policies that promote competition and demand for ICTs and ICT applications, with the goal being continued innovation of products and services at affordable prices, including free choice of ICT products, services and content.

[29] Establish global accounting standards for intangible assets, in order to make annual company reports more comparable and prevent fraudulent accounting practices.

[30] **Standardization:** Government should develop appropriate global and regional technical standards to foster the deployment and use of ICTs by ensuring the participation of all stakeholders and raising a broad awareness of the societal and ethical implications of the introduction of such standards.

[31] **Spectrum management:** The radio-frequency spectrum has to be managed in the public and general interest and by independent and transparent regulatory frameworks for the equitable allocation of frequencies to a plurality of media including community media.

[33] **Internet governance:** To widen the participation of all stakeholders in the global bottom-up policy development and decision making processes, Task Forces on related public policy and technical issues (Root Server, Multilingual Domain Names, Internet Security, IPv6, ENUM, Domain Name Disputes etc.) could be established. Such inter-governmental Task Forces should promote awareness, distribute knowledge and produce reports which would help all stakeholders to get a better understanding of the issues and to cooperate with the relevant bodies like ICANN, IETF, RIRs, ccTLDs and others.

[34] **Intellectual property rights:**

- International co-operation and exchange should be favoured and the development of voluntary best practices should be considered.
- Protection against unfair exploitation of indigenous knowledge and intellectual property.
- Use of peer-to-peer technology shall be promoted to share personal scientific knowledge and pre-prints and reprints written by scientific authors who have waived their right to payment.
- A specific status concerning transition and developing countries shall be recognised in regards to IPRs.
- The right of Internet hyperlinking, framing and mirroring shall not be restricted, under the provision that the name and URL of the original site is properly indicated and acknowledged.
- Free modification and adaptation of a copyrighted web page shall be permitted for personal non-commercial use as a means of free speech.
- Authors must be encouraged to retain ownership of their copyrights and not to automatically transfer copyrights to publishers or other intermediaries.
- A first-to-invent instead a first-to-file patent application rule shall be adopted, in order to better preserve the rights of academic scientists and low-income inventors.
- Fair use:

- The nature and extent of exceptions and limitations must be assessed by applying the three step test as set out in International treaties administered by WIPO: exceptions are confined to special cases which do not conflict with a normal exploitation of the work and do not unreasonably prejudice the legitimate interests of the right holder.
- Raise awareness on the issue of copyright exemptions and knowledge ownership through the education and training sectors.
- Exemptions for fair use of information should be harmonised and the extension of the public domain guaranteed as a mean to ensure access for all to information.
- Non-commercial use and private copying of digital content should be regarded and protected as fair use.
- Ensure free access to all scientific and engineering data and information that are available in archives, libraries and research institutions.
- Rules of loans existing in traditional libraries must be extended without hindrance to digital media belonging to online libraries.
- Databases:
  - Compilation work done in building databases and non-creative works shall not be protected under copyright law.
  - Databases built with the help of freely available scientific content should be accessible with a reasonable fee proportionate to the average income in the customer's country.
- Computer software should not be protected by copyright, or at least, the protection period of computer software should be shortened. Software shall not be patentable, in principle.

**[34 A] Media:** Public service values in the Information Society should be encouraged, including genuine public service broadcasting.

- State-controlled media should be transformed into editorially independent public service media organizations.
- Concentration of media ownership has to be avoided and a legal basis as well as public funding for community and non-profit media must be provided.
- Public financial support, training, preferred access to licenses, frequencies and technologies to promote community-based media, including facilitating links between traditional media and new ones, and to bridge the digital divide between the have and the have-nots.

**[34 B] Limitation to ISP responsibility and liability:**

- The primary responsibility for determining what content to access should remain with the individual Internet user; parents should take the primary responsibility for determining what their children should access.
- No implicit or explicit delegation of judicial power should be given or imposed on Internet Services Providers ISPs (Connection, site hosting) to the effect that they have to reach a conclusion on the nature and content of any information, wherever said information is stored, however the said information is transmitted. No exemption to this rule shall be allowed, even in the case of an alleged obviousness.

## **7) Promotion of development-oriented ICT applications for all**

**[35]** Tools should be developed to evaluate the social impact of ICTs and contribute to the eradication of poverty. This should be done with the involvement of all stakeholders, including the poor themselves, both in northern and southern countries.

[35] Public service broadcasters in particular can play an important role in informing citizens about ICTs, e-government, e-business, e-learning, and e-health.

[37] **E-Business:** Community information and communication centres should provide business development services to SMEs.

[38] **E-Learning.** Need to:

- Ensure that the production of international E-learning programmes incorporates contents, context and visions from developing countries so as to contribute to cultural diversity.
- Develop, promote and support gender sensitive educational programmes and appropriate learning environments including e-learning to increase women's access to education.

[38 A] Education through radio and TV can be interwoven and extended by individualized e-learning.

[39] **E-health:** Need to:

- Create healthcare systems that utilize ICTs to increase productivity and efficiency within the provision of healthcare globally.
- Promote the use of ICT as an effective tool in distributing information about, and advocating against, gender-based violence.
- Prepare and disseminate accessible information that strengthens prevention programmes that promote women's health such as education and information on sexual and reproductive health issues and on sexually-transmitted disease and HIV/AIDS.

[40 A] **Workers' rights:**

- Workers' privacy in the workplace where ICTs are being abused for the purpose of surveillance and monitoring such as CCTV, IC Card, and network-monitoring systems, should be protected. In the case of introducing new technology or policies that might infringe the worker's privacy, agreement with workers or labour unions should be made in advance in an open and transparent manner.
- Extending the rights of workers and their trade-unions to the use of the Internet and intranet of companies for the purpose of communication and solidarity.
- Safe and healthy, secure and fair working conditions, built on principles of social justice and gender equality, to be enjoyed by all workers in the Information Society.
- Recognition and application of fundamental rights and core labour standards of all workers in the Information Society, the right to privacy and to free access to the intranet of enterprises for workers, workers' representatives and trade unions.
- The reinforcement of dialogue between trade unions, employers and government to facilitate change in response to economic developments associated with the spread of the Information Society. The forging of social partnership is also vital in effectively mobilizing ICTs as development tools.

[41] **E-Environment:** ICTs should be mobilised in order to meet the specific of small islands under an environment endangered by hazards or global warming.

[41 A] There is a need to prioritize and develop uses of ICTs for development e.g. agriculture and early warning systems.

## 8) Cultural identity and linguistic diversity, local content and media development

[42] **Cultural and linguistic diversity:**

- Develop alternative incentive and rewards schemes that encourage the creation and dissemination of culturally and linguistically diverse content.
- All citizens should have access to pluralistic and independent radio and television services, relevant to their own culture and in their own language.

- Software companies and relevant national and international bodies should prioritise software development and transmission protocols in local languages.
- The development of policy, procedure and tools to ensure multi-lingualism in cyberspace, and in all other forms of media and communication systems, must respect the different language communities in the development of international standards.

**[43] Content:**

- Need for public investment in capacity building focused on the creation of locally produced, audience sensitive content that responds to local needs, and marginalized communities.
- There should be support for local creativity in any country, especially through promotion of local content to respond to local particularity and needs.
- The creation and preservation of traditional and indigenous knowledge should be promoted.
- Develop programmes in close consultation with indigenous peoples such that they are enabled in the Information Society and can utilize new tools, if desired, in their cultural production and community development.
- Include content about women and gender issues in all official Government web sites in addition to those web sites that specifically cover gender equality issues.
- Develop ICT-based information systems with relevant content for women to increase their economic opportunities and entrepreneurship skills, including information about national economic and trade policies and programmes.
- Strengthen relevant and diverse programmes focused on gender-sensitive curricula in formal and non-formal education for all and enhancing communication and media literacy for women.
- Community projects that can contribute to the democratic process, such as self-publication web sites on matters of local interest and affairs, should benefit from public support.
- Build capacity for the creation of locally produced audience sensitive content that responds to local needs.
- Publishers and libraries should play a crucial role in promoting knowledge, creativity and science and should be fully involved in the Information Society.
- Civil society should be active in the promotion of public awareness on the quality of content of information circulated.
- Content industries must have facilitated access to ICTs and training, in order to be acquainted with new models of content creation, production and dissemination.

**[44] Media:** Public participation in the Information Society shall be enabled through affordable and appropriate ICT applications allowing for local content creation, such as community media, non-profit media, and interactive Web applications.

- These media should serve as essential factors of empowering marginalised communities, particularly youth, women, indigenous peoples, children and minority groups.
- Recognition and support will be given to media based in local communities, thus contributing to creating local content and preserving and developing cultural and linguistic diversity.
- Develop, consistent with freedom of expression, regulatory mechanisms 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.

**9) Identifying and overcoming barriers to the achievement of the Information Society with a human perspective**

## ***B. Objectives***

[45a] *add to the World Wide Web after all villages to be connected,*

[45] Examples of possible concrete and comprehensive actions could include:

- 100 % of world's population to have access to domestic radio services by 2010
- 100% of world's population to have access to domestic TV services by 2015
- Information and media development programmes to promote local content services in all regions of the world should be in place within three years.
- In countries where they are still state-controlled, plans should be in place within three years to transform the main national broadcasters into editorially independent public service organizations.
- As digital television, with its interactive enhancements, will be an essential tool for making the services of the information society widely available, plans for a transition to digital TV should be in place in all countries by 2010
- Introduction of anti-monopoly scrutiny and laws regarding media concentration, including areas involving ICTs, in all countries by 2010.
- To ensure that the media are able to fulfill their role in the information society, laws should be put in place in every country by 2010 to grant journalists unhindered access to events of interest to the public, including the right to make recordings and establish contribution links without any interference by the public authorities
- Catalyze the volunteer network built during the international year of volunteers 2001 with nodes in over 100 countries, to support the plan of action of WSIS.
- Establish national/regional “online volunteering” services for human development, to provide opportunities to people to collaborate in projects around the world through the Internet.

## ***C. Strategies programmes, methods for implementation***

[46] Developing national ICT Strategies with achievable and measurable goals with the objective being the clear prioritization of actions that are necessary to fully embrace the Information Society.

[47] Bridging the digital divide is best achieved by government programmes increasing funding for the provision of books and other publications in libraries as well as for connecting end-users to the Internet, especially in developing countries and disadvantaged groups in developed nations.

#### ***D. International Cooperation and financing***

**[54] International cooperation:**

- Support special ICT volunteer initiatives, such as the UNITEs initiative of the UN Secretary General, a volunteer service oriented towards bridging the digital divide. These initiatives can be instrumental in helping to mainstream ICT into human development processes (and into development agencies, in particular).
- Support an international university volunteer network, involving students, professors and staff, to build capacity on the uses and opportunities of ICTs for development (as indicated in the UN ICT task force plan of action item 10).
- Foster and provide mechanisms for volunteer involvement of members of Diaspora (both on-site and online).
- Facilitate exchange mechanisms for volunteers to share experiences and cultivate knowledge across projects related to various ICT applications (e.g. E-Learning, e-government, e-business, e-health, etc.).
- Encourage international co-operation and exchange of knowledge—North-South, South-South, and North-North—through the use of ICTs.

**[55]** An official body must be settled within the UN in charge of proposing new mechanisms of funding adapted to a society in which international information flows are one of the main sources of growth.

**[55]** Strengthen national machineries for the advancement of women, particularly through increased financial resources and technical expertise that can facilitate their advocacy role and collaborative action amongst government bodies.

#### ***E. Follow up***

**[57] Indicators:**

- International community's commitments to ICT developments assistance should not be monitored through indicators alone but should also be evaluated by civil society, governments and the private sector.
- Develop, promote and implement research programmes that permit ongoing and comprehensive analysis of the impact of ICT and ICT policies on gender equality and women's empowerment.
- Develop appropriate indicators, conceptual frameworks and qualitative assessment methodologies and case studies to monitor progress towards gender equality in the ICT area. This requires analysis of the current status of women and men's participation in and use of ICT, including a comprehensive analysis of sex-disaggregated statistics and indicators and policy responses that target gender-based differences and inequalities.

**[58]** International organizations, national and local governments should commit to giving online information on all public policies, public money uses, as well as benchmarking of the results of their policies.

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