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|  | **Document CWG-SFP-3/5** |
| **8 August 2025** |
| **English only** |
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| Note by the Secretary-General | |
| SUMMARY OF THE ITU WORLD CAFÉ 2025 | |
| **Purpose**  This report outlines the outcomes and recommendations of the ITU World Café convened by the Secretary-General at Council 2025. It provides a summary of the key themes discussed, the perspectives shared and the recommendations that emerged from the dialogue.  **Action required**  The Council Working Group for strategic and financial plans 2028-2031 is invited to **consider** this document.  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  **References**  [*CWG-SFP website*](https://www.itu.int/en/council/CWG-SFP-2028-2031/Pages/default.aspx) *; Document* [*CWG-FHR-21/12*](https://www.itu.int/md/S25-CWGFHR21-C-0012/en) | |

Introduction

On 26 June 2025, the Secretary-General convened a World Café with the ITU Council to provide a dedicated forum for strategic reflection and forward-looking dialogue. This initiative served to support the Council in considering ITU’s future direction in the context of its Transformation Roadmap and ongoing UN reform efforts with a view to exploring how the Union could continue to serve its Membership effectively within an evolving technological and multilateral landscape.

The World Café was designed as an informal and participatory exchange, providing an open space for Councillors to reflect and share perspectives on the ITU’s long-term vision, operational priorities and potential areas for adaptation.

Thirty-one Councillors participated in the session, engaging in interactive group discussions structured around three overarching themes:

A. Vision: What kind of ITU does our Membership need by 2031?

B. Delivering Impact: In what ways can the ITU deliver its existing mandate more effectively?

C. Adapting to Change: Is it time for comprehensive ITU reforms to adapt and respond to the changing environment?

The discussions produced rich insights, underscoring the Membership’s shared commitment to an ITU that remains firmly anchored in its core mandate of delivering universal connectivity and sustainable digital transformation, while remaining responsive to technological, institutional, and multilateral developments. Participants highlighted the importance of maintaining the Union’s relevance through agility and modernization, with proposals aimed at ensuring the organization continues to deliver value in a changing global context. The dialogue also brought forward ideas on enhancing operational efficiency, improving transparency, and deepening collaboration both within the ITU membership and across the wider UN system.

The World Café process generated a set of seven recommendations, each accompanied by suggested sub-actions. They covered aspects such as institutional reform, strategic vision, operational performance, members’ engagement, technology-enabled governance, and coordination with membership and partners.

The Council Working Group for strategic and financial plans is invited to review these outcomes detailed below with a view to identifying how they could be integrated into the Strategic Plan, Transformation Roadmap, future work of the Union and preparations for PP-26.

Summary of feedback on themes of the ITU World Café

Theme A – ITU’s vision for 2031

Key findings

– ITU’s mandate: Remain focused on the core mandate of universal connectivity, and sustainable digital transformation avoiding politicization, while evolving with emerging technologies.

– Agility and Relevance: Adapt the pace of work to align with rapid technological shifts to avoid irrelevance.

– Value Proposition: Strengthen ITU’s appeal to Member States and industry through increased and more effective communication of membership benefits.

– Global Leadership: Position ITU as a leading neutral platform for digital cooperation emphasizing our convening role and inclusive approach.

– Rebranding: Consider modernizing ITU’s image and potentially even its name to reflect a broader digital remit.

Theme B – Delivering impact

Key findings

– Capacity Building: Scale training, especially in Africa and developing regions though Centres of Excellence, technical assistance, skills development and the Partner to Connect Initiative.

– Partnerships: Strengthen engagement with industry, academia and multistakeholder initiatives.

– Measurement of Results: Move from measuring outputs to measuring impact when tracking progress on digital skills, infrastructure development, digital resilience and inclusivity.

– Operational Efficiency: Improve alignment between policy, strategy, and execution and streamline internal procedures to speed up delivery.

– Transparency and Member Engagement: Enhance information sharing on budgets and operational plans so members can make informed decisions.

Theme C – Adapting to Change

Key findings

– Openness and the necessity of change: Embrace a culture of openness in all spheres of operation. Change is not optional, it is a necessity for ensuring the ITU continues to deliver on its mandate while adapting to emerging technologies, new actors, and shifting global priorities.

– Governance: Consider a holistic review of the Constitution and Convention, streamline the institutional structure and reduce governance bureaucracy.

– Internal Operations: Increase efficiency in financial and HR management; foster “One ITU” coordination across sectors.

– Use of Technology: Integrate AI and emerging tech into ITU’s own operations (administration, Governing Body processes and project management) and help guide membership and the UN in their digital transformation journeys.

– Collaboration: Coordinate better with other UN agencies and global initiatives to avoid duplication.

– Decision-making: Modernize decision-making to be more adaptive and responsive to member needs. Assess the consensus-based decision-making approach to ensure it supports timely and effective progress while maintaining inclusivity.

Recommendations and sub-actions

1 Reimagine the ITU

*a)* Identify and implement quick wins to make Governing Body processes more efficient and strategic.

*b)* Launch a visioning group ahead of PP-26 to assess structure, governance, and strategic alignment.

*c)* Examine the Constitution and Convention for potential modernization.

2 Reinforce ITU’s Core Mandate while Embracing Emerging Technologies

*a)* Focus on universal connectivity and sustainable digital transformation as the foundation of ITU’s work and as platform for use of emerging technologies.

*b)* Accelerate bridging the digital divide by strengthening work on connectivity, affordability, digital skills.

*c)* Expand Centres of Excellence, knowledge transfer and skilling for ITU membership.

*d)* Deepen the integration of AI, space, and other advanced technologies in standards and policy work.

3 Strengthen ITU’s Value Proposition and Branding

*a)* Consider a refreshed brand (including name) that reflects the ITU’s modern digital role.

*b)* Better articulate the benefits of membership to states and sector members.

4 Enhance Operational Efficiency and Agility

*a)* Streamline internal processes and improve cross-sector collaboration to achieve “One ITU”.

*b)* Modernize internal decision-making to match industry pace.

5 Increase Transparency and Member Engagement

*a)* Improve communication of budgets, plans, and initiatives to empower membership decision-making.

*b)* Encourage and expand participation of broader government ministries and industry in the work of the ITU.

6 Adopt Technology-Enabled Governance

*a)* Use AI and digital tools to enhance internal management, Governing Body processes and reporting.

*b)* Promote AI for Good and responsible governance frameworks externally.

7 Promote Collaboration

*a)* Improve coordination with other UN and multilateral initiatives to avoid duplication.

*b)* Focus resources on areas where ITU has unique value (standards, spectrum, connectivity).

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