WSIS+10 High-Level Event

Open Consultation Process

Official Submission Form #1 on the
Outcome Documents of the WSIS +10 High-Level Event
13-17 April 2014, Sharm el-Sheikh

Background: The WSIS+10 High-Level Event will be an extended version of the WSIS Forum to address the progress made in the implementation of the WSIS outcomes related to the WSIS Action Lines under mandates of the participating agencies, while providing a platform for multistakeholder coordination of the implementation of the WSIS outcomes, with involvement and participation of all WSIS action line facilitators, other UN agencies and all WSIS stakeholders.

The WSIS+10 High-Level Event will review the WSIS Outcomes (2003 and 2005) , in particular, related to the Action Lines with a view to developing proposals on a new vision beyond 2015, potentially also exploring new targets. The meeting will be organized taking into account decisions of the 68th Session of the UN General Assembly.

This open and inclusive open consultation process will result in:

- Draft Outcome Documents for consideration by the WSIS+10 High-Level Event, by 1st March 2014:

    - Draft WSIS+10 Statement on Implementation of WSIS Outcomes

    - Draft WSIS+10 Vision for WSIS Beyond 2015 under mandates of the participating Agencies

    (Please see the Official Submission Form #1)

- Multistakeholder guidance on the Thematic Aspects and Innovations on the Format of the WSIS +10 High-Level Event.

    (Please see the Official Submission Form #2)

Please note that formal submission should be sent to the wsis-info@itu.int not later than **20 September 2013**.

A. Your Information

Title: Ms

First name: Anja   *Last name:* Kovacs

Organization: Internet Democracy Project

Organization type: Civil Society   *Country:* India

B. Formal Input on the WSIS+10 High-Level Event Outcome Documents

Referring to the background documents i.e. the WSIS +10 Visioning Challenge, the Final Statement and Final Recommendations from the WSIS+10 Review Event Towards Knowledge Societies for Peace and Sustainable Development, the Booklet WSIS Forum 2012 & 2013: Identifying Emerging Trends and a Vision Beyond 2015 and the WSIS Forum 2013 Outcome Document, all WSIS Stakeholders are kindly invited to provide formal submissions and inputs towards the Outcome Documents of the WSIS+10 High-Level Event.

1. Draft WSIS+10 Statement on Implementation of WSIS Outcomes
(Please note that the anticipated length of this Statement is two pages)

Since the two Summits, in 2003 and 2005, WSIS Stakeholders have made every effort in implementing a common vision of the Information Society.

Overall;

a) What are the main achievements in the area of the information society, in particular, in the implementation of the WSIS Action Lines, in the past ten years?

The most important achievements have been made in the following areas:

- greater attention on the part of governments for the importance of having integrated ICT policies and greater attention for capacity building to ensure effective implementation of these at all levels; also improved availability of public information and access to and/or delivery of government, health and other services as a consequence

- a reduction of the access gap in quantitative terms due to substantial investments in infrastructure and improved access to local language content as a consequence of the internationalisation of the DNS, though qualitative gaps in physical access remain and access to content overall has not improved as much as would be hoped for (see for example continued restrictions in access to scientific knowledge or limited amount of content actually produced in local languags)

- greater robustness of the quality of data collected to check progress on the action lines and continued efforts to improve benchmarks as well as data collection

- firm establishment of the IGF as a crucial forum for multistakeholder policy dialogue related to

Internet governance as well as growing experiences and recognition of the value of multistakeholderism in Internet governance more broadly, including the fact that roles of different stakeholders are often broader and more fluid than the Tunis Agenda had foreseen.

b) What key identified challenges would need to be addressed in the next 10 years?

As we will argue under the next question, it is essential that an inclusive, development-oriented information society takes as its starting point a rights-based approach to development. The question that then automatically poses itself is: what kind of Internet and technology landscape do we require to ensure that such development can materialise and what changes are required to the current set-up to achieve this? It is in the answer to these questions that the keys to the main challenges for the next decade – identified and as yet unidentified - can be found.

The answers to this question broadly fall in two categories:
1) issues related to the architecture of the Internet and mobile technology landscape as such. Examples include:
- the implementation and protection of network neutrality across platforms;
- the corporatisation and monopolisation of the Internet and mobile telephony access and platforms, often by transnational companies that are difficult for individual states to regulate;
- widespread imbalances between surveillance on the one hand and protections of freedom of expression online on the other, undermining the empowering potential of the Internet while contributing to the growth of police states worldwide;
- a lack of support for innovation from the bottom up that would allow the poor and marginalised to give shape to the future development and their own use of technology themselves;
- etc.
2) issues related to the national and global Internet governance architecture, and in particular to the question of how multistakeholderism can be strengthened and further institutionalised in order to achieve appropriate solutions to the above posed problems.

c) What do the WSIS Stakeholders envision for an information/ knowledge society ensuring that the youth, women, poor, persons with disabilities and indigenous peoples benefit from the enormous opportunities provided by the ICTs?

An information society that has the interests of the most poor and marginalised people of our societies at its heart is necessarily an information society that takes as its starting point a rights-based approach to development. As economist Amartya Sen has argued, it is not by our wealth, but by our freedom that the quality of our lives should be measured. By asking what it is we need from technology to put such a rights-based approach to development into practice, we will be able to formulate a plan for the next decade that will effectively address the needs of the most marginalised. As such an approach will sharpen our objectives and required actions, it is also likely to ensure a far wider and more substantial engagement of all stakeholders than has hitherto been the case.

2. **Draft WSIS +10 Vision for WSIS Beyond 2015 under mandates of the participating agencies (Definition of new priorities and objectives for WSIS Action Lines beyond 2015)**
Please note: Participating agency refers to the Agencies tasked by the WSIS Outcomes to lead facilitation of WSIS Action Lines; See Annex to the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society.

a) In your opinion, what are the **key emerging trends** in the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) landscape that should be considered in the implementation of WSIS Action Lines beyond 2015? **Please specify the Action Line you are providing an input for**.

Please note: You may wish to refer to the WSIS Forum 2012 & 2013 Booklet on Identifying Emerging Trends and a Vision Beyond 2015, available at www.wsis.org/review/mpp.

- C1. The role of public governance authorities and all stakeholders in the promotion of ICTs for development
    - The need for a further and substantive strengthening of multistakeholderism.
- C2. Information and communication infrastructure
    - The need for a reassessment of infrastructure investments and policies that takes the needs of the poor and marginalised as its starting point.
- C3. Access to information and knowledge
    - The disabling impact of existing intellectual property right policies. The need for a far more substantive protection of the right to freedom of expression, not only as the right to receive information, but also the right to seek and impart information.
- C4. Capacity building
    - The need to think through how capacity building will be imparted to first generation learners as the next billions come online.
- C5. Building confidence and security in the use of ICTs
    - The contradictions between surveillance and security, with one undermining the other.
- C6. Enabling environment
    - Network neutrality; the impact of corporate monopolies both with regard to access and platforms; the importance of protecting human rights online at all times.
- C7. ICT Applications:
    - E-government
        - Click here to enter text.
    - E-business
        - Click here to enter text.
    - E-learning
        - Click here to enter text.
    - E-health
        - Click here to enter text.
    - E-employment
        - Click here to enter text.
    - E-environment
        - Click here to enter text.
    - E-agriculture
        - Click here to enter text.
    - E-science
        - Click here to enter text.
- C8. Cultural diversity and identity, linguistic diversity and local content
    - The need for increased production of relevant local content.
- C9. Media
    - The need for protection of citizen journalists.
- C10. Ethical dimensions of the Information Society
    - Click here to enter text.
- C11. International and regional cooperation
    - Click here to enter text.

b) What are areas that have **not been adequately captured by the framework of the existing 11 WSIS Action Lines** and would need to be addressed beyond 2015? **Please specify the Action Line you are providing an input for**.

- C1. The role of public governance authorities and all stakeholders in the promotion of ICTs for development
    - The need to back multistakeholderism up with sufficient financial support to make it effective.
- C2. Information and communication infrastructure
    - Click here to enter text.
- C3. Access to information and knowledge
    - Click here to enter text.
- C4. Capacity building
    - Click here to enter text.
- C5. Building confidence and security in the use of ICTs
    - Click here to enter text.
- C6. Enabling environment
    - Network neutrality; the impact of corporate monopolies both with regard to access and platforms; the importance of protecting human rights online at all times.
- C7. ICT Applications:
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    - E-environment
        - Click here to enter text.
    - E-agriculture
        - Click here to enter text.
    - E-science
        - Click here to enter text.
- C8. Cultural diversity and identity, linguistic diversity and local content
    - Click here to enter text.
- C9. Media
    - The fact that while media is a freedom of expression issue, freedom of expression is not only a media issue. Clubbing the two in the WSIS process might not do sufficient justice to either.
- C10. Ethical dimensions of the Information Society
    - The dangers of highlighting an ethical dimension in policy outside of the human rights framework.
- C11. International and regional cooperation
    - Click here to enter text.

c) In your opinion are there any priority areas that need to be addressed in the implementation of WSIS Beyond 2015.

The priorities we have identified are those mentioned in our answer to question 1.b). In order to move forward adequately on these challenges, it is, however, essential that the WSIS Platform for Action be redefined. In particular, we recommend that the WSIS Platform for Action makes greater distinction between two different types of activities:

1) those (aspects of) challenges that tie in with broader developmental challenges and thus will need to be addressed through policy and initiatives that extend beyond the WSIS Agenda as such. Examples include aspects of action lines C4 especially C7. The limited participation of women in the information society, for example, can not be seen or resolved separately from their limited access to resources in general and will thus need to be tackled in tandem with such broader initiatives.

2) those (aspects of) challenges for which WSIS stakeholders are uniquely placed to develop solutions as they relate directly to the question of what the Internet and wider technology landscape should look like to facilitate rights-based development. No other process is as appropriately placed to tackle these important challenges.

The Internet Democracy Project recommends that the first set of challenges are retained as action lines, while the second set of challenges, as they are cross-cutting issues, will be brought under the larger theme of Internet governance, where they will each be delineated in more detail. This will be followed by the development of an action plan around each issue, as well as implementation of the plan, subject to regular review. While activities under the action lines should continue, as they form an important supporting base for other work, it is the development of these cross-cutting thematic issues and progress on their resolution from a rights-based perspective that should get priority over the next decade.

We believe that such a clearer compartmentalisation of issues will likely also contribute to greater participation of a wider range of stakeholders – something that has been somewhat of a disappointment to date – as this new arrangement of issues provides for better distinction between various levels and types of intervention. As a consequence, it will be easier for stakeholders to understand where and how they can best bring their expertise to bear in a meaningful fashion.

3. **Ensuring accountability of the WSIS Action Lines beyond 2015 (Targets and Indicators for an open and inclusive information/knowledge society for all beyond 2015)**
Please note that information provided under this point will be relevant to the second physical meeting of the open consultation process on WSIS+10 High-Level Event.

a) How can the **monitoring and evaluation** of future implementation of the WSIS process, in particular, the Action Lines be better enabled?

In order to ensure effective monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the WSIS process, it is crucial that substantive multistakeholder participation is enabled at all steps of the process.

Provided that its procedures are reworked to enable genuine multistakeholder participation, the UN Commission on Science and Technology for Development would be well-placed to be the final point of reference for such monitoring and evaluation processes. The facilitation of substantive participation of all stakeholders in the CSTD, it deserves to be repeated, is however essential.

b) What are the **priority areas** that the post-2015 WSIS process should focus on and which goals and targets could monitor the new vision for WSIS beyond 2015?

As mentioned before, both the starting point and overarching goal for the post-2015 WSIS process should be to implement a rights-based approach to the inclusive and development-oriented information society.

More specific goals and targets should be developed around the cross-cutting thematic issues that we have highlighted earlier.

4. Any additional comments or suggestions

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