



WSIS FORUM | 19-23 MARCH 2018

Geneva | Switzerland

Facilitation Meeting for WSIS Action Lines C1, C7eGov and C11

1) Title

Aligning ICT and e-Government Strategies with National Development Strategies – WSIS Action Line Facilitation Meeting for C1 (promotion of ICTs), C7 e-Government and C11(partnerships)

2) Name of Organization/s organizing the session

United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA)

3) Relevance with the WSIS Action Lines – please specify the Action lines C1 to C11

- a) C1. The role of public governance authorities and all stakeholders in the promotion of ICTs for development
- b) C7. ICT Applications – E-Government
- c) C11. International and regional cooperation

4) Key achievements, announcements, launches, agreements, and commitments (these will be reflected in the press release and Outcomes Document of the WSIS Forum 2018)

The outcome of the facilitation meeting will feed into:

- a) United Nations E-Government Survey 2018, the only tool that assesses the progress in e-government development of 193 UN Member States
- b) High-level Political Forum 2018, the main UN platform to review the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

5) Main outcomes highlighting the following:

I. Debated Issues

C1 – Promotion of ICTs for SDGs

- The vital role of ICTs in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
- Low visibility of ICTs in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, National Development Plans, and in the High level political forum (HLPF)
- The need for significant dialogue in aligning ICT and e- Government Strategies with National Development Strategies (NDS) to ensure that developing countries can build resilient and sustainable societies
- Equitable and inclusive growth and access to safe water by using ICTs
- Human rights issues, accessibility, security, privacy network neutrality
- The role of innovation and enabling environment in promotion
- Bridging digital divide and investing in digital skills via education and vocational training for those who are on jobs, and life-long learning to put into practice (ICT/e-Government as part of life learning)

C7 e-Government



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- Openness in all aspects of e-Government Development (open source, data, standards, communities, markets, culture)
- Importance of having a digital marketplace to link technology or people with digital projects in the public sector and especially involving Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) more in the government contracts
- The role of ICT/e-Government technology in helping disabled and leaving no one behind
- Strategies to address the causes of digital divide i) mainly elderly who lacks the confidence to use ICTs and ii) economic causes and affordability of access

C11 - Partnerships

- Importance of public private partnerships (PPP) especially with local organizations, micro-enterprises, and local SMEs
- Importance of setting digital centers in urban/rural areas, PPP hosted by governments but run by entrepreneurs
- Role of UN regional offices i.e. the WSIS activities undertaken by UNECA in Africa
- The role of regional perspective – no one can do it alone, importance of information sharing, promotion of regional cooperation, role of UN regional commissions
- The important role of private sector in deployment of ICTs and e-Government and not treating mega ICT companies and private sector as a cash machine for taxation

II. Quotes

- “ Make things open: it makes things better!” Mr. Chris Ferguson, Director at Cabinet Office, Government Digital Service, United Kingdom
- “The first rule of any technology used in a business is that automation applied to an efficient operation will magnify the efficiency. The second is that automation applied to an inefficient operation will magnify the inefficiency.” Bill Gates quoted by a panelist
- “When we are rebuilding Iraq, we did not go to other parts of world for an e-government strategy, we went to our neighbors for help” Dr. Haidar Fraihat of ESCWA quoting an Iraq official to indicate the importance of regional cooperation
- “ICTs have unprecedented potential for delivering equitable and inclusive growth, protecting the environment and improving the well-being of people around the world.” UN Deputy-Secretary General Amina J. Mohammed quoted by a panelist

III. Overall outcomes of the session highlighting

- The importance of promoting common principles and standards



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- The importance of Openness in designing e-government systems (open source, open data, open standards, open communities, open markets, open culture)
- Paying attention to human rights issues (cyber security, data protection, access to information) while designing ICT and E-Government Strategies
- The importance of using non-threatening language while promoting ICTs for development i.e. Service at doorsteps instead of e-government, Time, Cost, Value instead of corruption or transparency
- The role of private sector and public private partnerships in delivering digital services

IV. Main linkages with the Sustainable Development Goals

Digital government is an important factor for achieving the SDGs and can generate benefits in the form of eliminating poverty and increasing prosperity. Exploiting ICTs through digital government has far-reaching potential in improving public services that are critical to the poor. ICTs can ensure inclusion and participation to fulfil the motto of leaving no one behind. Increasing access to digital technologies brings more choice and greater convenience for the most vulnerable. Through inclusion, and innovation, poor and disadvantaged are provided by opportunities that were previously out of reach. Governments by exploiting ICTs can provide new services or improve existing ones that are critical to the poor in ending poverty, hunger and achieving food security as well as ensuring healthy lives and empowering women and girls.

V. Emerging Trends related to WSIS Action Lines identified during the meeting

- a. Digital marketplace for public sector to connect Government ICT projects with people and technology particularly from SMEs
- b. Services through public private partnerships or in partnerships with civil society organizations

VI. Suggestions for Thematic Aspects that might be included in the WSIS Forum 2019

“Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality” in line with the theme of the HLPF 2019