WSIS Forum 2018 OUTCOME DOCUMENT

Template for Submission of Executive Summaries for

 Thematic/Country Workshop/ Action Line Facilitation Meetings/ Interactive Sessions/ High Level Dialogues/Publication Releases/Briefings

Deadline: Thursday 22 March, 2018
Exception: For sessions on Friday 23 March, please send at the latest 2 hours after the session
*Please note that the WSIS Forum 2018 Outcome Document will be released on the **23rd of March***
(the last day of the Forum)

1) **Title of your session**

   How can technology be a force for good in Africa?

2) **Name of Organization/s organizing the session**

   Research ICT Africa

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

   C2, C3, C4, C5, C6, C8, C10, C11

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

5) **Main outcomes highlighting the following:**

 I. **Debated Issues**

Panelists from a diversity of fields – including someone from UNHCR working on connectivity for refugees, someone working on digital rights issues in Egypt, someone deploying community networks in Africa, someone working on trade and development for UNCTAD, and panelists collecting data on ICT access and use in Africa and Latin America – provided input on contextual challenges to enabling people from the global South to benefit from technology's purpose to be a force for good in Africa and beyond.

 II. **Quotes**

We have almost zero official statistics on microwork and its broader impact. Such missing stats form a vital basis for policies to promote fair micro work - Scarlett Fondeur Gill, **UNCTAD, Geneva, Switzerland**

As UNHCR works on promoting connectivity for refugees, we also realise that part of our efforts should be used to promote the digital rights of refugees and their host communities – John Warnes, UNHCR

Rigorous data collection is crucial to understanding contextual issues that underpin digital divides in Africa and beyond – Prof Alison Gillwald, Research ICT Africa

III.   Overall outcomes of the session highlighting

There was agreement that despite the technological advancement and the reduction of the digital divide in many countries in the global South, the increased level of connectedness brings about new challenges for the vulnerable of society. Not only is a considerable portion of the populations in the global South still disconnected or connected to expensive and poor quality networks, but their rights online might be neglected; making them even more vulnerable in the digital space. Therefore, a new divide is emerging between those who are aware of their digital rights (including how they are regulated in their jurisdictions and how to protect themselves against digital rights violations) and those who are unware of what their digital rights are and do not have resources – skills, means and capabilities - to enforce these.

Panelists and audience members agreed that tthere's a need for more data to fully understand how digital gaps are affecting citizens of the global South and to enable the realization of not only the WSIS goals but also the SDGs.

IV.   Main linkages with the Sustainable Development Goals

SDG 1, SDG 2,SDG 5,SDG 8,SDG 10, SDG 16,SDG 17

V.   Emerging Trends related to WSIS Action Lines identified during the meeting
VI.   Suggestions for Thematic Aspects that might be included in the WSIS Forum 2019

How are the needs and rights of refugees protected and promoted in the Information Society?

One suggestion/ comment is that the 45 minutes allowed for this session was really too little to allow sufficient audience participation.

Please complete this document and send to Matthew L. Greenspan, Matthew.Greenspan@itu.int AND Gitanjali Sah, Gitanjali.Sah@itu.int