

Concept Note: Facilitation meeting on WSIS action lines C1, C7 and C11 under the theme

“ICTs for Inclusive, Resilient and Sustainable Societies and Economies: WSIS Action Lines for achieving SDGs”

BACKGROUND

The United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) through the Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government (DPIDG) serves as facilitator for the implementation of and follow-up to the WSIS action lines:

- [C1 - The role of public governance authorities and all stakeholders in the promotion of ICTs for development](#)
- [C7 - ICT Applications: E-government](#)
- [C11 - International and regional cooperation](#)

The overall aim of this facilitation meeting is to bring together all WSIS stakeholders and discuss major developments since the last facilitation meeting¹ which took place in September 2020. Some of these developments are listed below as suggestions for further discussion. This meeting will also serve as an opportunity to deliberate on the upcoming 2022 edition of the United Nations E-Government Survey.

Call for inputs by UN Member States: submit by **31st of May** by filling out the following form at <https://forms.office.com/r/Zgu36qQ1C8>.

OBJECTIVES

C1 - The role of public governance authorities and all stakeholders in the promotion of ICTs for development

The scale, spread and speed of change brought about by digital technology is unprecedented, especially in a time of global pandemic. As stated in the GA resolution 74/306, economic and social inequalities, in addition to digital divides, have been exacerbated by COVID-19 and the progress made towards achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and all its goals and targets along with hard-won development gains have been considerably undermined. The resolution, likewise, recognizes the role and leverage that Member States possess in reducing the impact of the COVID-19 through digital technologies and urges them to use

¹ <https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2020/Agenda/Session/334>

those to advance digital governance through concerted actions all while also ensuring a path towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Some of the questions that will be addressed under this action line are as follows:

- How can public policymakers expand their role and impact for the promotion of ICT applications for sustainable development?
- What kind of skills and capacities are needed for institutions and officials for an inclusive and effective adoption of ICTs?
- How can public governance authorities and all stakeholders ensure the inclusion of the vulnerable during this rapid technological change?
- What are some adequate ways in which public figures can improve their standing in society for their use of digital technologies in public service delivery and development?
- What are some examples of ICT applications which have had a positive impact and ones that have had a negative impact on development?

C7 - ICT Applications: E-government

Since 2001, DPIDG has published the [United Nations E-Government Survey](#) on a biennial basis. The Survey is the only global report that assesses the e-government development status of all Member States of the United Nations. The assessment rates the e-government performance of both countries and cities and for each level, relative to one another, as opposed to being an absolute measurement. It recognizes that each country should decide upon the level and extent of its e-government initiatives in keeping with its own national development priorities and with a view to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

The Survey tracks progress of e-government development at the local level via the Local Online Services Index (LOSI) and at the national level via the E-Government Development Index (EGDI). The EGDI, is a composite index based on the weighted average of three normalized indices. One-third from the Online Service Index (OSI) based on data collected from an independent survey questionnaire entitled Online Service Questionnaire (OSQ), conducted by UNDESA, which assesses the national online presence of all 193 United Nations Member States; one-third is derived from the Telecommunications Infrastructure Index (TII) based on data provided by the International Telecommunications Union (ITU); and one-third from the Human Capital Index (HCI) based on data provided by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The Survey also includes additional E-Participation Index extending the Survey by focusing “e-information sharing”, “e-consultation” and “e-decision-making”.

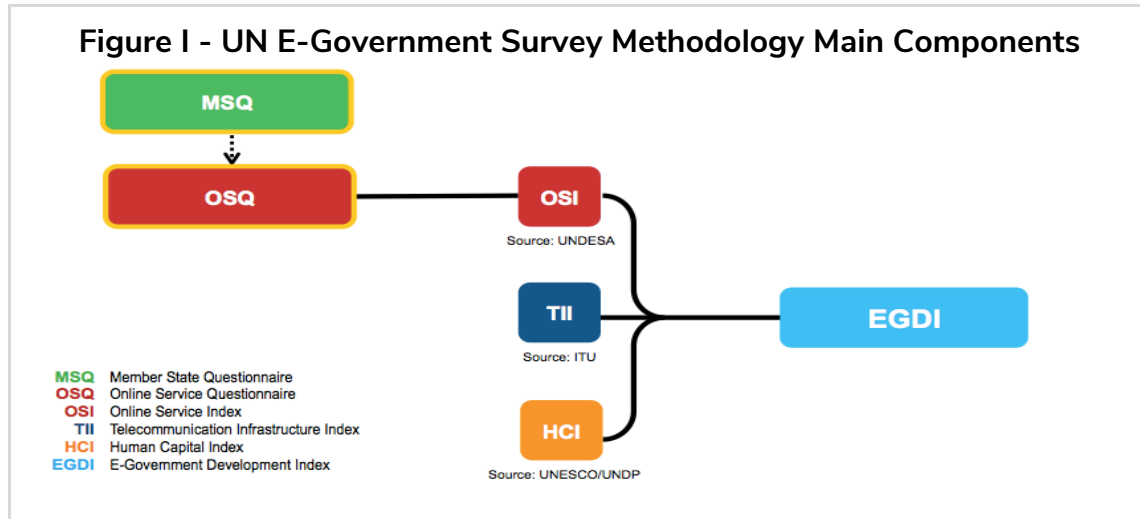


Table 4.1 LOSI and OSI levels: convergence and divergence. (Number and percentage of cities)

	Very high OSI 2020	High OSI 2020	Middle OSI 2020	Low OSI 2020
Very high LOSI 2020	13 (15.1%)	1 (1.2%)	None	None
High LOSI 2020	12 (13.9%)	4 (4.7%)	None	None
Middle LOSI 2020	9 (10.5%)	16 (18.6%)	8 (9.3%)	None
Low LOSI 2020	None	11 (12.8%)	12 (13.9%)	None

Table from chapter 4 on LOSI from the UN E-Government Survey 2020

As we could observe from the COVID-19 pandemic, digital transformation can be driven at a remarkable pace and ensue unprecedented development and adoption of ICTs in governments at all levels. This pivotal change brought by the pandemic should also incite governments and academics to further research into the future of digital government and the key trends in technology and e-government. This endeavor, which the UN E-Government Survey 2022 will also include in its research, allows for two main outcomes; the first one will be an overall better preparedness of governments in harnessing these new technologies and secondly ensure digital inclusion and strengthen engagement and partnership to guarantee that no one is left behind (LNOB) and not in spite of these new ICT applications but because of them.

Some of the questions that will be addressed under this action line are as follows:

- In setting the ground for the future of digital government, and understanding limitation of existing methodological frameworks, what are possible changes/refinement in
 - (i) E-Government Development Index EGDI (with sub-indicators OSI, TII, HCI); and
 - (ii) Local online services index (LOSI) for municipalities and cities.
- Should both the OSI and LOSI analytical framework be organized around 4 areas: Technology, Content, Services, and Participation?
- How can the E-Government Survey better assess e-participation, that includes the following dimensions:
 - (i.) e-information (providing information; and e-enabling);
 - (ii) e-consultation (e-dialogue and e-engagement);
 - (iii) e-decision-making (e-collaboration and e-empowerment).
- What are the areas that the Survey look at to help anticipate the major digital trends that will affect governments at the local and national levels in the future?
- What are the expected digital government applications and uses expected to stay and the ones to disappear in the post COVID-19 world?
- Which challenges and opportunities has COVID-19 introduced in the development of digital government both for the local and national levels?
- How can cities better utilize ICTs to match their national counterpart's E-Government level?
- Which digital skills will be most valued in the coming years for digital government?
- How has the COVID-19 pandemic altered people's opinion on the use of ICTs by governments both locally and nationally?
- How can governments better utilize and champion digital government for achieving the SDGs?
- What should the Survey focus on in general – both in 2022 and in future editions?

C11 - International and regional cooperation

The COVID-19 has prompted many dialogues and initiatives in the area of international and regional cooperation to promote universal access and bridging the digital divide since the last annual meeting of the WSIS. While it is not possible to list all initiatives here, there are two that deserve highlighting. The first one launched in the beginning of 2020 is [the UN 75 Initiative](#) and Declaration which recognized the critical power and role that digital technologies can play in transforming society. The second one, released in May 2020, is [the United Nations Report of the Secretary-General Roadmap for Digital Cooperation](#), a report drafted for the

implementation of the recommendations of the High-level Panel on Digital Cooperation.

Some of the questions that will be addressed under this action line are as follows:

- How can global reports such as the UN E-government Survey support the facilitation and promotion of international and regional cooperation amongst UN member states?
- What are some of the areas that need urgent cooperation?
- Which measures can governments take to increase regional and international cooperation?
- How can digital technologies improve cooperation across countries and across issues?
- What are some lessons to take into account from the past year for a better cooperation in the future?
- How can UN DESA STI forum in May 2021 contribute to these discussions?

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

The outcomes of this meeting will feed into the final outcome document of the WSIS Forum 2021, as well as to the other venues such as the [Multi-stakeholder forum on science, technology and innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals](#), [United Nations High Level Political Forum](#), preparations of the [United Nations E-Government Survey 2022](#), [UN General Assembly Resolutions on WSIS and its follow-up](#), [Internet Governance Forum](#), [The 24th session for the Commission on Science and Technology for Development](#), [The 20th session for the Committee of Experts on Public Administration](#), [Reports of the UN Secretary-General on WSIS follow-up](#), and [ECOSOC resolutions related to the WSIS follow-up](#) among others.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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