Session Outcome Document

Summary of Session: Digital inclusion and social security services: Key challenges and lessons learned

International Social Security Association (ISSA) and United Nation University Operating Unit on Policy-Driven Electronic Governance (UNU-EGOV)

17 March 2023, 10:00 – 10:45 CET

https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2023/Agenda/Session/384

Key Issues discussed (5-8 bullet points)

- The panel and participants discussed the key challenges and solutions identified by social security institutions globally, not least with respect to the cases (evidence) of the project background and context (video, 2:53, in English) and this finding (available in English, French, Spanish and German). The workshop will discuss potential improvement areas for social security plus any lessons learned applicable in the public sector at large. The audience highlighted a number of examples from both the African and Latin American context.
- The key barriers to equitable access to social security services in a digital world, both in terms of accessibility, skills and capacities was outlined and discussed in plenary and with the participants.
- Link between the potential actions of social security institutions improve digital inclusion and the public sector at large was covered, not least the link between social security objectives and actions taken by e.g. telecommunication regulators to ensure affordable and reliable access by all, or educational authorities to ensure digital skills.

Towards WSIS+20 and WSIS beyond 2025, please share your views on the emerging trends, challenges, achievements, and opportunities in the implementation of the WSIS Action Lines to date (5-8 bullets)

- General consensus that technology has both a positive impact on service delivery incl cost efficiency, effectiveness, access but can also exclude and deeping existing socio-economic divides if not applied appropriately.
Challenges identified in the study with respect to digital inclusion in social security includes:
Continued need for affordable and reliable access to the internet and devices (even if global
users have jumped from some 47% to 66% of global population between 2021 and 2022),
improved digital skills and critical analysis, further focus by authorities to lower the barrier to
services not least online (e.g. language use, design, user-centricity).

Trends within social security organisations to address the digital divide includes simplified
communication and design, administrative burden reduction and technology as an enabler of
innovation.

Trends also validated by audience as relevant to help improve digital inclusion in service
delivery (from their experiences).

Tangible outcomes (such as key achievements, announcements, launches, agreements, and
commitments (3-5 bullet points)

- Active engagement of 34 participants (18 online and 16 present excluding panel and WSIS staff), representing Africa, the America’s, Asia and Europe.
- Validation of key digital inclusion and service access challenges and potential solutions in social security by a non-social security audience representing the public and private sectors, civil society and international organisations.
- Validation of the potential applicability of solutions identified in social security in other public sector service areas.

Actionable plan (2-5 points)

- Incorporate project and WSIS workshop input and conclusion into ISSA’s triennium working programme 2023-2025 on innovation, particularly with respect to communication guidelines, quality and design standards.
- Present and consult WSIS Forum audience on future recommendations to social security entitles with respect to technology enabled innovation, communication and design standards for improved digital inclusion (both ISSA and UNU-EGOV initiatives in 2023-2025 period).
- Present experiences from the ISSA triennium on innovation in social security at WSIS 2024.

Suggestions for thematic aspects that might be included in the WSIS Forum 2024 (WSIS+20 Forum High-Level Event) (one paragraph)

- Public sector innovation as a tool to increase inclusion (leaving no one behind).