

- One answer may lie in connecting schools to the Internet. Connecting schools holds the promise of bringing the Internet within reach of all young people and ensuring the right to universal education, for girls and boys, rich and poor. Promoting the Internet in schools also opens the door to the expanding universe of digital libraries and other knowledge resources such as open universities, e-learning, training programmes for ICT-based careers, and training about responsible online behavior.
- Connecting schools can connect entire communities. Women's groups can use school Internet facilities for career training, literacy development, education or e-commerce opportunities. Schools can be equipped with assistive technologies to open the Internet to persons with disabilities. Connecting schools in by indigenous people expands the boundaries of connected communities even further just as using low-cost laptops or smart phones can help make connecting schools more affordable. Once a school in a previously un-connected locale has an Internet connection, the network can be extended to local government offices, health care services and commercial use.
- This session explored innovative governmental policies designed to ensure that primary, secondary and tertiary schools are connected to the Internet in line with the goals set by world leaders at WSIS and with the MDGs on universal education and gender equality. It looked at regulatory measures such as universal service funds, education-rate initiatives and government funding for rural broadband networks to finance school connectivity and the role the private sector is playing. Also, observed the latest trends in digital libraries, open universities and other online knowledge resources as well as low-cost laptops that schools can tap, as well as safety online initiatives to promote child online protection. Further more, this session examined other public and private initiatives to connect communities or develop content and applications for social and economic development; and explored how Youth Forum participants could put school and community connectivity on the political agenda in their country.