



General Assembly’s overall review of the implementation of WSIS outcomes

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A. Your Information

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The ten years since stage two of the WSIS process concluded in Tunis has seen incredible expansion of Internet connectivity. The growth of ICT has helped to bridge the digital divide and has been a catalyst for economic, social, and political development. With more than two billion new users and upwards of 40 percent of the world’s population connected we have seen enormous progress towards implementing the WSIS vision of a global Information Society.

Growth in connectivity has been most successful when driven by investments in ICT infrastructure from the private sector, often in progressively deregulated and increasingly competitive markets. At the same time without proper governance frameworks in place and effective public-private partnerships many of these efforts would have never occurred. It is the balancing of interests and collaboration between stakeholders that has enabled the most fruitful developments.

WSIS embodies this model, bringing together governments, civil society, the private sector, intergovernmental and international organizations, as well as the technical community, in an important effort to encourage a multistakeholder approach to Internet governance matters.

¹ When specifying your stakeholder type, please indicate one of the following: Government, Civil Society, Private Sector, Academia, and Technical Sector.

The Regional Internet Registries (RIRs) have long been stewards of community-driven, multistakeholder governance and welcomed the WSIS process as an important mechanism that discovered and leveraged this successful approach to build a people-centered, inclusive, development-oriented, and global Information society.

WSIS, and its offspring processes such as the Internet Governance Forum (IGF), provide an important space for dialogue. For the RIRs it has offered a bridge between the technical community and policy-makers to address common interest issues. WSIS helped understand many governments, particularly in emerging economies, to the importance of the Internet while also helping engineers to better understand government processes and decision-making. Through capacity building efforts and public policy discussions, particularly at the IGF best practices forums, WSIS was instrumental in increasing understanding of many fundamental technical issues such as IPv6 deployment.

To truly harness the potential of ICT for development, bridging the digital divide must remain as the central priority to achieve WSIS outcomes. Connectivity is a catalyst for development, however for these gains to be sustainable, we must work to maintain an open, interoperable, and stable Internet. Whether that is by addressing critical numbering issues such as IPv6 adoption or adapting to emerging challenges such as cybersecurity, it will require cooperation between actors from all stakeholder groups to achieve.

That is why for the RIRs a key priority is to keep this dialogue running and open, for which WSIS and the IGF has proved to be excellent channels. The challenge is to evolve the WSIS platform further in a way that both, policy-makers and the technical community can continue to benefit from each other.

As the WSIS+10 review reflects on lessons learned, it itself should embrace the core ideal of collaboration. The multistakeholder approach reflects the reality of the Internet, a distributed, dynamic system that has the potential to connect all of humanity. Facilitating active engagement from the wider community at all stages of the review will ensure that the next ten years of WSIS build on the success of the last ten and the collective capabilities of the whole information society is leveraged to promote innovative policy decisions and achieve the WSIS vision.