



WSIS FORUM 2015

Submitted by General Secretariat

Background

The ITU has planned, organized and hosted the WSIS Forum since 2009 in collaboration with the co-organizers, UNESCO, UNCTAD and UNDP. Since 2009, the WSIS Forum has evolved into a unique platform for multistakeholder consensus and discussions on crucial issues concerning the information society. The WSIS Forum results in an Outcome Document each year. This document aims at identifying the Emerging Trends in Action lines. The WSIS Forum builds upon the tradition of the annual WSIS meetings, and its new format is the result of open consultations with all WSIS Stakeholders. The forum comprises of high-level panels, WSIS Action Lines meetings, thematic workshops, and various platforms for networking and initiation of partnerships.

Please refer to the following for the yearly editions of the WSIS Forum, you can also find the Outcome Documents and the Emerging Trends Document:

- WSIS Forum 2009 - <http://www.itu.int/wsis/implementation/2009/forum/>
- WSIS Forum 2010 - <http://www.itu.int/wsis/implementation/2010/forum/>
- WSIS Forum 2011 - <http://www.itu.int/wsis/implementation/2011/forum/>
- WSIS Forum 2012 - <http://www.itu.int/wsis/implementation/2012/forum/>
- WSIS Forum 2013 - <http://www.itu.int/wsis/implementation/2013/forum/>
- WSIS Forum 2014 - <http://www.itu.int/wsis/implementation/2014/forum/>
- WSIS Forum 2015 - <http://www.itu.int/wsis/implementation/2015/forum/>

Following the revision of ITU PP Resolution 140 (Rev. Busan, 2014), "ITU's role in implementing the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society and in the overall review by United Nations General Assembly of their implementation", the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference in 2014 further strengthened the Union's mandate in relation to the implementation of WSIS outcomes. According to the resolution, ITU should

continue the coordination of WSIS forums, subject to the outcomes of UNGA's overall review in December 2015.

General Information

The WSIS Forum 2015 represented the world's largest annual gathering of the «ICT for development» community. The WSIS Forum, co-organized by ITU, UNESCO, UNDP and UNCTAD, in close collaboration with all WSIS Action Line Facilitators/Co-Facilitators (UNDESA, FAO, UNEP, WHO, UN Women, WIPO, WFP, ILO, WMO, UN, ITC, UPU, UNODC, UNICEF and UN Regional Commissions) has proven to be an efficient mechanism for coordination of multistakeholder implementation activities, information exchange, creation of knowledge, sharing of best practices and continues to provide assistance in developing multistakeholder and public/private partnerships to advance development goals. This forum provided structured opportunities to network, learn and participate in multi-stakeholder discussions and consultations on WSIS implementation.

ITU, UNESCO, UNCTAD and UNDP welcomed all WSIS Stakeholders to the WSIS Forum 2015, held from 25–29 May 2015. This event was built upon the tradition of annual WSIS May meetings, and its format was the result of the open consultations with all WSIS Stakeholders. Emerging trends in 11 WSIS Action Lines both in terms of Policy and Technology are produced as an Outcome of WSIS Forum in a multistakeholder environment on an annual basis. The WSIS Forum 2015 Open Consultation Process on the Thematic Aspects and Innovations on the Format aimed at ensuring the participatory and inclusive spirit of the WSIS Forum 2015 by actively engaging governments, civil society, the private sector and intergovernmental organizations in the preparatory process. The Agenda and Programme of the WSIS Forum was built on the basis of the official submissions received during the Open Consultation Process.

The WSIS Forum 2015 comprised of the High-Level Track: 26th and 27th May that focused on innovation, partnerships and the link between ICTs and the Global Sustainable Development Agenda and the Forum Track: 25th, 28th and 29th May - that provided a platform for multi-stakeholder coordination of the implementation of the WSIS outcomes, with involvement and participation of all WSIS action line facilitators, other UN agencies and all WSIS stakeholders. The High level Track consisted of Opening Segment, Policy Statements: by Ministers, CEOs, Heads of UN Agencies and Civil Society Leaders, WSIS Prizes Ceremony and the Ministerial Round Table. The Forum track consisted of Exhibition, Innovation/ Incubation Track, World Cafés, Linking ICTs and the Sustainable Development Agenda Track, Partnerships Track, Thematic Workshops, Country Workshops, UN Regional Commission meetings, UNGIS (High-level and working level meetings), Interactive Sessions, Action Line Facilitation meetings, Action line Facilitators' meeting and Knowledge Exchange.

This year's Forum was attended by over 1700 stakeholders from more than 140 different countries. More than 70 Ministers and deputies, several Ambassadors, CEOs and civil

society leaders participated. The presence of so many leaders here in Geneva, was a sign of the stakeholders' commitment to the WSIS Process and that the ICTs will continue to play a significant role in tomorrow's development agenda.

WSIS Forum 2015 was comprised of over 150 workshops, interactive sessions and knowledge exchanges among the diverse range of stakeholders. The sessions demonstrated the open, collaborative and transparent nature of the WSIS Process. The Forum Track, besides various interactive sessions, also included an Exhibition, world cafés, thematic workshops, country workshops and UN Regional Commission meetings, with the involvement and participation of all WSIS Action Line Facilitators, other UN agencies and WSIS stakeholders. Key topics on the agenda this year included innovation, accessibility, gender empowerment, sustainable development (the UN 'Post-2015 Agenda'), cybersecurity, and WSIS beyond 2015 (WSIS+10).

Outcome Documents

WSIS Forum 2015 resulted in series of documents and reports that provide in-depth reporting, analysis and a fresh vision for the issues concerning the information society, in particular the WSIS Action Lines. The outcomes of the WSIS Forum 2015 were presented on the last day, 29th May:

- [WSIS Forum 2015 High Level Track Policy Statements](#)
- [WSIS Forum 2015 Track Outcome Document](#)
- [WSIS SDG Matrix](#)
- [WSIS Stocktaking Report 2015](#)
- [WSIS Stocktaking Success Stories 2015](#)
- [Advancing Sustainable Development Through Information and Communication Technologies: WSIS Action Lines Enabling SDGs](#)

High-Level Track Policy Statements, available at

<http://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2015/PolicyStatements/>

The High-Level Track of WSIS Forum 2015 was a platform for high-ranking officials of WSIS Stakeholders: Government, Private Sector, Civil Society and International Organization; to share their views on the achievements, challenges and recommendations on the implementation of WSIS Action Lines, emerging trends and matters of strategic importance to the development of the telecommunication, information and communication technology sectors.

Forum Track Outcome Document, available at:

http://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2015/Content/doc/outcomes/WSISForum2015_OutcomeDocument_ForumTrack.pdf

The WSIS Forum, a unique global platform for multi-stakeholder coordination of implementation of WSIS-related activities, projects, and initiatives, aims to define

strategies and tactics that would help countries and organizations harness the power of ICTs to meet development goals more effectively.

WSIS SDG Matrix, Linking WSIS Action Lines with Sustainable Development Goals, available at: <http://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/sdg/>

The WSIS Action line and SDG matrix was launched during the WSIS Forum 2015. To underline the key role of ICTs in promoting sustainable development, all WSIS Action Line Facilitators, under coordination by ITU, developed this WSIS-SDG Matrix demonstrating the direct links between the WSIS Action Lines and the proposed SDGs.

Advancing Sustainable Development Through Information and Communication Technologies: WSIS Action Lines Enabling SDGs, available at:

http://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/sdg/Content/wsis-sdg_draftbooklet.pdf

This mapping exercise draws direct linkages of the WSIS Action Lines with the proposed SDGs to continue strengthening the impact of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) for sustainable development. Each UN Action Line Facilitator has analyzed the connections and relations of their respective Action Line with the proposed SDGs and their targets. The goal is to create a clear and direct link and an explicit connection between the key aim of the WSIS, that of harnessing the potential of ICTs to promote and realize the development goals, and the post 2015 development agenda, so as to contribute to the realization of the latter.

WSIS Forum 2016

WSIS Forum 2016 will be held from 2–6 May 2016 in Geneva, Switzerland. Following the outcomes of the WSIS Action Line Facilitators meetings held since 2006, and the exchange of views amongst several WSIS stakeholders, the organizers of the WSIS Forum, ITU, UNESCO, UNCTAD and UNDP will soon be announcing the Open Consultation Process on the thematic aspects and innovations on the format of the WSIS Forum 2016.

Launch of the OCP is scheduled for the first week of October 2015 when WSIS community will be invited to share comments; first phase is envisaged to take place online until January 2016 when the First Physical Meeting is planned to take place, offering the opportunity to develop ways forward in compliance with the outcomes of the Overall Review.

The dates of the Forum, 2–6 May 2016, are tentative and subject to the final outcomes of the UNGA High-Level Meeting on the Overall Review of the Implementation of the WSIS Outcomes in December 2015.