GLOBAL
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Suggestions for the WSIS+20 High-Level Event 2025

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1. **Innovative Ideas: What new ideas or changes would make the event structure and programming more impactful?**

In 2025, a myriad of processes and initiatives at the intersection of sustainable development and Internet governance will continue to be implemented and the work of defining and defending the importance of a multistakeholder model to Internet governance will be critical. To this end, the WSIS+20 outcome should affirm the extension of the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) mandate and integrate the implementation of the Global Digital Compact into the WSIS. To support this outcome, the WSIS+20 High-Level Event should leverage its convening authority to design an impactful, deliberate, thoughtful, and inclusive program. The High-Level event should also explore avenues and processes to reinforce and build upon existing efforts to empower multistakeholder processes and support work toward a free, open, interoperable, and secure Internet. To achieve this, sessions should be interactive and inclusive of all stakeholder groups (technical community, civil society, academia, governments, and private sector) and seek to enable the exchange of knowledge and perspectives as well as collaborations and concrete actions.

The WSIS High Level Forum should facilitate a broad consultation about the WSIS+20 review. Given that the WSIS Forum will be the last major multistakeholder gathering, it would be the last opportunity for the multistakeholder Internet community to provide input on the WSIS+20 review process.

2. **Alignment with the SDGs: How can the WSIS+20 High-Level Event better support the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)? What new strategies should be considered in light of the UNGA WSIS+20 Review?**

To ensure that the WSIS+20 High-Level Event better supports the Sustainable Development Goals, its processes and procedures must be underpinned by inclusive, transparent, accountable, and meaningful multistakeholder consultation and engagement. Furthermore, it will be important that the WSIS+20 High-Level Event:

- *Emphasizes the importance of a multistakeholder and human rights-respecting approach to SDG implementation through-out its high-level messaging.*
- *Explores how multistakeholder governance of the internet and digital technologies can enhance human rights and further advance the SDGs.*
- *Articulates actionable steps for how digital advancements can achieve the SDGs.*

- *Raises awareness of the impacts of ICTs on at-risk communities and compliance with international human rights standards and SDG commitments.*
- *Highlights the importance of the sustainability of the IGF and creates a clear connection between the global IGF and regional IGFs and the role of the IGF in supporting the SDGs.*
- *Ensures implementation efforts across processes (WSIS, GDC, SDGs etc) are streamlined to avoid duplication.*
- *Builds cohesiveness between action lines and implementation strategies and understandings of the same across stakeholder groups.*
- *Leverages the AI for Good Forum being organized by the ITU and organize a series of high-level and action-oriented conversations that bring together and feature key decision-makers.*
- *Initiates a conversation for the 2030 development agenda and how best to shape it through a multistakeholder process.*

3. **Key Topics for the High-Level Segment: What are the most pressing global issues or emerging trends that should be highlighted during the High-Level Segment to stay relevant and impactful?**

The High-Level segment should pursue an agenda focused on human rights, multistakeholder governance, digital technologies, and development that brings stakeholders together across regions and ensures benefits for all stakeholders. It should also integrate elements of the Global Digital Compact into its agenda. Towards this, it will be important for the high-level segment to highlight the following issues:

- ***AI:** Artificial intelligence, including a human rights-based approach to the governance of AI, inclusive data governance, the impact of AI on the digital divide, and the opportunities and challenges that AI poses for the achievement of an inclusive information society for 2025 and beyond.*
- ***Rights respecting digital public infrastructure**: Development initiatives that are grounded in human rights, including rights respecting digital public infrastructure.*
- ***Conflict:** The impact of conflict on human rights and achieving an inclusive information environment, including the impact on internet access, connectivity, and digital inclusion through actions like tampering with undersea cables and cyberattacks.*
- ***Surveillance and the SDGs**: The risks to sustainable development and achieving the SDGs that disproportionate surveillance practices pose, including surveillance powers enabled through broad cyber security regulation and cybercrime efforts.*

- **Multi stakeholder approaches**: Multi stakeholder approaches to internet governance that embody the principles of multistakeholderism as articulated in the NETMundial+10 São Paulo Guidelines.
- **Shrinking Civic Spaces:** The impact that shrinking civic space has on the achievement of the SDGs, development, and a free, open, secure, and interoperable internet.
- **Data governance**: how data can help shape and advance the SGDs.

4. **Format for High-Level Segment: What interactive formats could make the High-Level Segment more dynamic and engaging?**

To ensure equitable representation and participation among diverse stakeholders, the WSIS Forum should prioritize the inclusion of civil society, the technical community, and representatives from various jurisdictions, with a particular focus on participants from the Global Majority. Furthermore, the High-Level Segment should curate interactive panels featuring fewer speakers to promote more engaging discussions and foster greater gender and geographic balance. Finally, the High-Level Segment should allocate adequate time for Q&A sessions to encourage meaningful interaction and feedback from participants.

5. **Visibility of Local and Cross-Sectoral Initiatives: How can we better highlight local and cross-sectoral efforts during the event to inspire wider participation?**

To effectively engage stakeholders and leverage existing partnerships, the WSIS Forum should initiate outreach efforts before the event to surface potential collaborations that can be amplified through parallel workshops. There should also be opportunities for non-governmental stakeholders to participate in preparatory panels and planning for sessions. Additionally, the Forum should actively engage with IGF Dynamic Coalitions and Policy Networks to involve their expertise and perspectives in the planning and execution of the Forum. This collaborative approach will ensure that the WSIS Forum builds upon existing work and fosters and supports partnerships to address critical internet governance issues.

6. **Inclusive Participation: How can we design the parallel sessions to ensure diverse and balanced participation.**

To foster a more inclusive and equitable WSIS Forum, it is crucial to prioritize Global Majority participation across all aspects of the event. This includes ensuring that individuals from the Global Majority, particularly those part of civil society, are represented on panels, have their proposals considered for workshops, and receive support for travel and visa costs. This will require adequate planning and human

resources given the Forum will be held in Geneva and obtaining a visa can be a significant barrier to participation from individuals based in the Global Majority. This includes communicating if workshops have been accepted and sharing the agenda far enough in advance for individuals to decide if they will be attending.

WSIS Action Lines Stocktaking

Please refer to the WSIS+20 Review Action Lines: Milestones, Challenges and Emerging Trends beyond 2025 *documents prepared by the WSIS Action Line facilitators.*

7. What are the main achievements in the implementation of the WSIS Action Lines in the past 20 years?
   a. C1. The role of governments and all stakeholders in the promotion of ICTs for development*
   b. C2. Information and communication infrastructure*
   c. C3. Access to information and knowledge*
   d. C4. Capacity building*
   e. C5. Building confidence and security in use of ICTs*
   f. C6. Enabling environment*
   g. C7. ICT applications: benefits in all aspects of life — E-government*
   h. C7. ICT applications: benefits in all aspects of life — E-business*
   i. C7. ICT applications: benefits in all aspects of life — E-learning*
   j. C7. ICT applications: benefits in all aspects of life — E-health*
   k. C7. ICT applications: benefits in all aspects of life — E-employment*
   l. C7. ICT applications: benefits in all aspects of life — E-environment*
   m. C7. ICT applications: benefits in all aspects of life — E-agriculture*
   n. C7. ICT applications: benefits in all aspects of life — E-science*
   o. C8. Cultural diversity and identity, linguistic diversity and local content*
   p. C9. Media*
   q. C10. Ethical dimensions of the Information Society*
   r. C11. International and regional cooperation*

8. **What are the key challenges in implementing the WSIS Action Lines and what areas have not been adequately captured by the framework of the existing 11 WSIS Action Lines that would need to be addressed beyond 2025?**

   a. **C1. The role of governments and all stakeholders in the promotion of ICTs for development***

While the WSIS process has been successful in bringing together different stakeholders for the promotion of ICTs and development, challenges in achieving this this action line have included building flexibility and adaptability into the implementation process to account for evolving

contexts and circumstances in the context of ICTs for development and ensuring that national initiatives for the promotion of ICTs for development are rights respecting and grounded in human rights.

b.   C2. Information and communication infrastructure*

Areas that this action line can also address include:
- *The digital divide created by AI, access to AI infrastructure, AI data standards, and moves towards AI sovereignty.*
- *Government mandates in the context of AI that can undermine the right to freedom of expression, right to privacy and other human rights.*

c.   C3. Access to information and knowledge*

d.   C4. Capacity building*

e.   C5. Building confidence and security in use of ICTs*

A key challenge in implementing this action line and a focus area going forward can ensure efforts to enhance security are grounded in and support human rights as opposed to undermining them.

f.   C6. Enabling environment*
g.   C7. ICT applications: benefits in all aspects of life — E-government*
h.   C7. ICT applications: benefits in all aspects of life — E-business*
i.   C7. ICT applications: benefits in all aspects of life — E-learning*
j.   C7. ICT applications: benefits in all aspects of life — E-health*
k.   C7. ICT applications: benefits in all aspects of life — E-employment*
l.   C7. ICT applications: benefits in all aspects of life — E-environment*
m.   C7. ICT applications: benefits in all aspects of life — E-agriculture*
n.   C7. ICT applications: benefits in all aspects of life — E-science*
o.   C8. Cultural diversity and identity, linguistic diversity and local content*

Areas that this action line can improve upon and address going forward include diversifying access through locally-driven efforts such as community networks, exploring ways to enable connectivity with a focus on blended financing mechanisms, and supporting the development of content in local languages.

p.   C9. Media*

q.   C10. Ethical dimensions of the Information Society*

Areas that this action line can improve upon and address going forward include ensuring approaches to AI and emerging technologies are grounded in human rights and supported by ethical frameworks.

r.   C11. International and regional cooperation*

A challenge in the implementation of this action line has been to ensure that the WSIS process and implementation is truly multi stakeholder and results in benefits for all stakeholders across regions. This is particularly true for stakeholders from Global Majority countries.

9. **What are the key emerging issues and trends in the field of ICTs for development that should be taken into consideration for the WSIS+20 review?**

   GNI would suggest the following issues/trends for consideration:

   - *Applying Human Rights Due Diligence (HRDD) practices in the design, development, and use of AI and emerging technology.*
   - *Data and infrastructure for AI development.*
   - *Architecting rights respecting digital public infrastructure.*
   - *Connectivity and digital inclusion.*
   - *Digital literacy.*
   - *Shrinking civic space.*
   - *Protection of human rights online during times of conflict.*

10. **Looking ahead to WSIS+20 and beyond, what is your vision for the future of the WSIS process and its role in shaping the global digital agenda?**

   The WSIS process has been instrumental in forging the connection between digital technologies and development. This critical role must continue in the future. To do this the WSIS Forum must build on, support, and integrate new and existing forums and processes. This includes affirming the renewing of the mandate of the IGF and integrating implementation of the Global Digital Compact into the WSIS ecosystem. Through a focus on addressing past shortcomings, the WSIS Forum should transform into a mechanism where stakeholders come together to establish implementation principles and set actionable goals pertaining to digital technologies and sustainable development. Stakeholders could leverage the Forum to advance their commitment to both the open, global and interoperable Internet and the SDGs. To realize this vision, multistakeholder participation will be indispensable - the private sector, technical community, and civil society must be fully engaged to support member states in achieving the SDGs and creating an enabling and inclusive digital environment. Any future process must ensure the inclusion of the Global South, specifically civil society organizations and the technical community.

11. Are you interested in organizing a session at the WSIS+20 High-Level Event 2025?
    <mark>Yes</mark> No
    Please note, this form is for a single session request. If you have multiple session proposals, please fill out a separate form for each one.

12. Please provide the title of your proposed session.
Multistakeholderism: from principles to practice

13. Please specify the organiser(s) of your proposed session.
Global Network Initiative and Global Partners Digital

14. Please provide a brief description of your proposed session, including speaker names and their affiliations, and the session format.

TBC

15. The WSIS Secretariat may merge sessions with similar themes due to a high number of session requests. If necessary, are you open to merging your session with similar proposals?
    <mark>**Yes**</mark> No
    Please note, selecting to opt out of merging your session will lower the chances of your request being accepted.

Exhibition Request

16. Would you like to request an exhibition space at the WSIS+20 High-Level Event 2025?
    Yes <mark>No</mark>

17. Please specify the theme of your stall.

18. Please specify any requirements for your stall.

Sponsorship

19. Would you like to sponsor a coffee break or reception at the WSIS+20 High-Level Event 2025?
    Yes <mark>No</mark>

20. The WSIS Forum relies on extrabudgetary funding each year to cover operational costs through strategic partnerships. Would you like to become a sponsor and serve as the digital transformation partner for the WSIS+20 High-Level Event 2025?

Yes <mark>No</mark>

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21. Can you suggest any partnerships or collaborations that could enhance the implementation of WSIS 2025 and beyond?