

**UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
FOR DEVELOPMENT (CSTD)**

**Contribution to the CSTD ten-year review of the implementation of WSIS
outcomes**

Submitted by

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United Nations Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD)

Questionnaire for CSTD's 10-year review of WSIS implementation

1. To what extent, in your experience, has the "people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented Information Society", envisaged in the opening paragraph of the WSIS Geneva Declaration of Principles, developed in the ten years since WSIS?

The WSIS process has been considered in European Strategies – both at EU level and at national levels: e.g. in the policy for „people-centred, inclusive and development oriented Information Society”.

The most important principles of the strategy are: open, competitive market for infocommunication services, freedom of opinion expressing and free and non-discriminative access to information, inclusion of all, serving interests of all, promoting entrepreneurship and innovation environment. One of the most important goals of the European strategies is education and training in order to close the existing digital gap in the society.

Though a lot of achievements have been reached, there is – among others – one very important issue we have to concentrate more common efforts – that is the problem of “changing mind-set” of people, both service providers and customers, content providers and users. We need more conscious and innovative entrepreneurs, more active and trusting users to make ICT a real and sufficiently contributing part of our businesses and life.

As for Hungary: the Hungarian government has accepted its ICT strategy for the period of 2014-2020. Together with the strategy actions and support programs, sufficient financial and other support have also been included. Thank to these programs Hungary has a relatively strong electronic, and software industry that already earned wide international reputation.

2. How far do you consider the implementation of specific WSIS outcomes to have been achieved?

The annual IGF fora have been successful during the past ten year. Their multistakeholder approach without binding proposals/decisions helped indeed a lot for understanding the issues participants put on the agenda of discussions. This multistakeholder approach should be maintained and promoted in the future, as well. In our view naturally there are points where the IGF process may be improved: e.g. (1) supporting more participation from developing poor regions, finding more ways of

how the developed, richer nations may offer and provide more help to the poor regions in order to obtain a faster way of joining information society development and enjoying the benefits of ICT services. We can see good practices, e.g. the rapid growth in the use of mobile communication in Africa; or (2) finding ways how the outcomes of the IGF meeting will reach wide communities; etc.

Also, it is worth to mention that there are good examples of the national, regional IGF meetings and discussions with multistakeholder participation, however there are many countries where this practice should also be considered in the future.

We have not grasps much concerning the other proposal of the WSIS Declaration, which is enhanced cooperation. Enhanced cooperation between the interested partners may take very different forms: open consultation on development and policy issues, special groups discussions of given technology issues, interest groups, etc.; there are examples of good practices, but a lot of has to be done in order to make these examples visible, exchange their results globally or in a much broader scale.

3. How has the implementation of WSIS outcomes contributed towards the development of a "people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented Information Society"?

Modern ICT technologies and services, as well as digital content available on the web influence all in our work and life. The success of the progress of a given region much depends on how inclusive and user-centred are these services and the real value of the content accessible via them. In other words, Information Society is a very close matter to all of us. Yet, building it is a complex process: involvement and commitment of all of partners has to be an organic part of the process.

WSIS outcomes have put focus on this, on the multistakeholder approach, on the involvement of all regions, all groups of people, economic and society players in order to find the best ways, to understand the needs of all, to search and possibly reach compromises.

4. What are the challenges to the implementation of WSIS outcomes? What are the challenges that have inhibited the emergence of a "people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented Information Society"?

As stated above – information society affects all of us. That also means there is a strong mutual interdependence on the economic conditions and the level of the development of information society. For regions like Central and Eastern Europe (and particularly the so called V4 or Visegrad countries) the 2008 Economic crisis and its consequences naturally created real obstacles, difficulties on the way of ICT progress, via rearranging the economic priorities.

Partly that is the reason why not so much focus has been made on changing the old mind-set, creating more innovative environment, building more entrepreneurial communities. Building information society demands for more trust and confidence – which is obvious when we speak about ICT services. But trust and confidence also are requested towards economic and social progress – so the consequences of the crisis are still here around us.

5. How are these challenges being addressed? What approaches have proved to be effective in your experience?

As information society has its positive impact on all sectors of the society and economy, a real commitment from all is needed in order to build and promote further information society. Hence, governments have to create and implement well established strategy – which needs to be regularly reviewed and modified to adopt it to the fast changing IT sector. The strategy has to be worked out and modified with the involvement of all partners (multistakeholders). It should also be accompanied with perfectly adopted programs, actions: governmental programs and actions, industrial programs, civil society programs and actions, education programs, etc.

When speaking on information society we always have to keep in mind the new requirements for human qualities: innovative approach, entrepreneurship, mobility, readiness to adapt to changing requirements, readiness to acquire new skills and knowledge, care about both human and natural environment, care about sustainability, etc. So, education, training is to be an essential part of the programs. Since this is a long lasting process we may expect real results after several years, yet we have to act now, immediately.

6. What do you consider the most important emerging trends in technology and other aspects of ICTs which have affected implementation of WSIS outcomes since the Summit? What has been their impact?

All communications, electronics and IT technologies have been developing and changing in a rapid and convergent way.

In communications we are witnessing the appearance of new generations, smart devices and new services. The hunger for tremendous amount of data transmission has been closely followed by local, regional and global broadband technologies and networks. On the field of electronic devices the following trends may be observed: cheaper, smaller, smarter portable devices with a lot of new applications, emerging IT technologies offer broadening variety of new applications, never seen before and all of them with improved user friendliness. An interesting and very popular example of applications is e.g. the result of the merge of electronic and space technologies – that resulted in the appearance and extensive use of global navigation systems.

The future promises huge development in the field of Big Data, Internet of Things, spreading of applications of cloud computing. These new technologies demand for rather careful policies and regulatory environment with the real a true involvement of all stakeholders.

7. What should be the priorities for stakeholders seeking to achieve WSIS outcomes and progress towards the Information Society, taking into account emerging trends?

The previous principles should be preserved, such as:

- open and non-discriminatory ICT services
- freedom of the internet
- safety and security of ICT services
- sustainability of ICT
- development of new innovative services with costumers in centre
- multistakeholder approach, etc.

In the future we will have to focus on understanding the wide spectrum of interests and priorities of the various stakeholders, in order to preserve openness and progress of ICT services, which should be based on entrepreneurship, innovative approach from providers, readiness to use ICT by customers, and also, preparedness for commitment from the side of R&D+I community.

In the near future Big Data, Internet of Things and cloud computing services seem to be fast developing services together with NGA and 5G communication services. All these will demand for tremendous transmission capacity in fast and ultra-fast broadband networks, in a secure and reliable service environment.

8. What role should information and communications play in the implementation of the post-2015 development agenda?

The ICT sector is a key for economic and social development. Hence, this sector has to be in the centre of the development agenda – without well-developed ICT services and access to these services the underdeveloped regions will not be able to offer:

- their citizens the necessary 21th century knowledge, culture and skills,
- their entrepreneurs the necessary business environment.

Information Society is the responsibility and also the beneficial environment of all participants. Hence, multistakeholder approach should be followed when putting together and implementing the post-2015 development agenda.

9. Please add any other comments that you wish to make on the subject of the review that you believe would be helpful.