

**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

**THE INTERNET SOCIETY**

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## **10-year Review of Progress Made in the Implementation of WSIS outcomes**

### **UN CSTD Consultation**

Submission by The Internet Society

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#### **7. 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?**

Information societies are by definition user-centric as they use technology tools to advance human capacity, and technical infrastructures that lead to economic growth. This applies particularly so in the case of the Internet. Since WSIS we have seen considerable progress towards a people-centered, inclusive and development-oriented information society. A key and indispensable feature of this progress has been the multistakeholder approach and implementation at the international level, regional, and local levels.

Throughout 2014, the Internet community has proved its capacity to produce tangible outcomes within multistakeholder collaboration frameworks. Brazil's NETMundial event was one such achievement, producing key principles and a roadmap for Internet Governance in a bottom-up and inclusive fashion. At the 2014 Internet Governance Forum (IGF), the Internet community continued with the same pace to face the challenges and fostered more inclusive and collaborative processes designed towards more, substantive results. More and more regional and local IGFs have developed over the last ten years and this also is a testament to the uptake and diversification of Internet governance models and the discussions that accompany them.

Major challenges lay ahead still for counteracting the wide disparities in Internet infrastructure development and enabling entire groups and countries to benefit from universal access to information and knowledge.

In this context, positive recent trends include: global ICT connectivity and affordability; the rapid diffusion of mobile communication, applications, and use of mobile technology; fiber and under-sea cable roll-outs; the establishment of

peering fora and many more network operator groups (NOGs); Internet exchange points (IXPs) development and growth, sustained by investments in human capacity and uptake of better network management, routing, and efficiencies; ccTLD development and local DNS strengthening; identification of best-practices and ways to remove “barriers” to connectivity; the increased availability of multilingual content and IDNs; and, the advent of new services and applications, including e-health, e-education and e-business.

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

With regards to the specific area of cooperation among stakeholders, and from the perspective of a non-governmental organization like ISOC, there is no doubt that WSIS was a significant achievement for international policy discussions. In particular, WSIS paved the way and enabled an environment of participation and inclusiveness.

As a result, WSIS made a critical contribution by raising awareness of the importance of the multi-stakeholder approach to achieving efficient, informed and transparent public governance. ISOC has long embraced this collaborative approach to its own work and has encouraged other organizations to follow a similar inclusive and diverse structures. We operate collaboratively and inclusively to pursue public policy objectives, working with governments, national and international intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, civil society groups, the private sector and other parties to help them shape policies and reach decisions about the Internet that are consistent with our core values.

Since WSIS, the ISOC community has expanded its collaboration with intergovernmental organizations, such as the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the African Union, the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), the African Telecommunication Union (ATU), the Caribbean Telecommunication Union (CTU), the European Internet Exchange Point Association (Euro-IX), the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), the Organization of American States/Inter-American Telecommunication Commission (OAS/CITEL), the Council of Europe, and with national governments to promote the expansion of the open Internet around the world. For more information on ISOC’s collaborative work:

<http://www.internetsociety.org/who-we-are/our-community-and-partners>

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

See question 7.

**10. 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"?**

With the remaining Internet users coming mainly from the developing world, fostering a vibrant multistakeholder cooperation **at the local and regional levels** is essential for the future of the global Internet.

Some of the key challenges include the need for increasing awareness and **capacity building** regarding existing cooperation mechanisms. The number of parallel processes and different modes of participation can be unsettling for newcomers, and further efforts should be made to make them easier to understand and engage with.

An additional challenge relates to the interaction of stakeholders and, in particular, the policy makers and the technical community. In the beginning, these two communities were working on separate spaces. As the Internet grew and its evolution became contingent both on policy and technical specifications, the need to align the work of these two communities became increasingly significant. Contributing to addressing this challenge, ISOC has initiated **fellowships for policy makers to participate in Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF)** meetings. The IETF is a loosely organized group of engineers that plays a critical role in shaping the future evolution of the Internet through the development of technical standards and protocols.

In accordance with the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society, the **monitoring and evaluations of future implementation of the WSIS process** should involve all stakeholders. Stakeholders could assess on a regular basis what has been achieved and analyze the underlying factors for success. The process could also identify areas where implementation is not as successful as was hoped and further investigate the obstacles and challenges.

Examining the reasons why a policy was not successful can provide valuable lessons: best practices seeking to improve information of all stakeholders involved could be identified; and sharing best practices could provide guidance and set benchmarks.

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

The common denominator of success for Internet governance is undoubtedly the multistakeholder process, which is now an essential component to engagement in addressing issues at the local and global levels. The multistakeholder approach recognizes that a diverse set of interested parties including governments, civil society, business, technical and academic - all have respective roles and responsibilities, expertise and valuable know-how to bring to the table.

As a concrete example, we have observed a successful formula for Internet infrastructure development that combines human, technical, and governance

infrastructure development. We call this “Smart Development”. An example of Smart Development through a multistakeholder structure can be seen in Internet exchange point (IXP) development and training. The technical communities in countries like Brazil, Argentina, Grenada, Nigeria, Lesotho, Tunisia, Serbia, Thailand, Vanuatu works to manage (govern), build (technical), and sustain (human) IXPs. They must interface with government officials, and this is critical sustainable development for the community by the community.

**12. 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?**

Since the Tunis Summit, the increasing number of Internet users has been one of the most significant trends, with now close to 2 billions users worldwide. Part of this success can be attributed to the acceleration of mobile and wireless access, which will remain central in furthering bridging the digital divide. New undersea cables and the development of Internet exchange points (IXPs) to optimize local traffic have been and will stay paramount to this effort. IXPs, peering fora, and network operator group (NOG) meetings (as noted above) also have contributed greatly to better network management, traffic routing, and diffusion of open standards and new technologies to manage IXPs, route traffic, and the development of virtual infrastructure management.

With more people connected to the Internet, scalability issues are more important then ever. This has shed light on the importance of embracing the latest open standards for Internet interoperability and security, such as IPv6 or DNSSEC, that will allow to meet these scaling challenges.

Another significant trend is the mainstreaming of Human Rights considerations into Internet governance and ICT discussions. ICTs can be an opportunity for people’s rights – from education, to access to knowledge and the freedom to share information and ideas across frontiers. But the same openness has also generated challenges in terms of privacy violations (by private actors or government), as well as online censorship and monitoring.

Bridges are being built between multistakeholder Internet fora, such as the IGF, and traditional fora such as the U.N. Human Rights Council. The latter has produced numerous reports regarding freedom of expression, surveillance and privacy in the digital age.

Other key trends include developments regarding online identities, green ICTs as well as the emergence of Machine-to-Machine (M2M) communications, and applications that assist with anything from crowdsourcing to network traffic management.

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

For the Internet Society, one of the greatest achievements of the WSIS is the recognition that the governance of the Internet is not reserved to one set of actors; cooperation and collaboration is the only way to advance an enabling Internet environment. However, more work needs to be done to better understand how the Internet environment can help address local, regional and international challenges.

To this end, stakeholders must craft policies that remove barriers to connectivity and innovation, encourage the development of local content, as well as to foster competition and nurture communities that are active in developing the Internet at the local level.

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

ICTs should play a central role in the implementation of the post-2015 development agenda.

The Internet enables people to share ideas and access knowledge in unexpected ways and scale: it is decentralized and with its end-to-end design it empowers people to innovate at the edges rather than the center of the network; beyond its technical features, the Internet also facilitates the ability for individuals to share, receive and impart information and ideas across frontiers. The open and global Internet provides virtually an unlimited source of knowledge and educational material.

An inclusive and bottom-up model of Internet policy and technical development provides a key framework to leverage the network's benefits and to contribute to achieve the objectives of the global development agenda.

Along the years, the open Internet model has demonstrated a remarkable flexibility to change and an ability to uphold new innovations and business models. As demand for connectivity and content is growing at a fast pace in developing countries, the Internet Society is committed at the global and regional levels to ensure that the Internet holds true to its potential for development.

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

In accordance with the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society, the 10-year Review should assess “the multi-stakeholder implementation at the international level (...) taking into account the themes and action lines in the Geneva Plan of Action” (paragraph 108) The review process should focus on the implementation of existing goals. WSIS+10 should also reaffirm the principles and commitments made in Geneva in 2003 and in Tunis in 2005 and emphasize the importance of the multi-stakeholder approach at all levels.

We believe strong participation in the WSIS process is a condition to its success and that the **preparatory process should be as inclusive and multistakeholder as possible**, in line with the Tunis Agenda. All preparatory meetings and related events should be open and inclusive of all stakeholders.

In keeping with the essence of WSIS, an informal group, gathering stakeholders from governments, international organizations, business, civil society and the technical and academic communities should be established to assist the UN to develop the agenda. This group would be critical in engaging and raising awareness at all ends of the Internet ecosystem and they should not duplicate work already done, but augment past efforts.

In order to enhance participation in the preparatory process, we would strongly suggest that the majority of the preparatory meetings be done on-line (having regular conference calls, creating mailing lists on various action lines, etc.) or on the side of major conferences such as the IGF MAG and Open Consultations meetings.

**16. We would also welcome any documents, reports, etc. that you can forward which you think will provide useful evidence for the review. Please send these to [cstd-wsis10@unctad.org](mailto:cstd-wsis10@unctad.org). It would be helpful if you could list these in this box, together with any URL which enables access to them on the World Wide Web.**

- The Open Internet: <http://www.internetsociety.org/doc/open-internet-what-it-and-how-avoid-mistaking-it-something-else>
- Who makes the Internet work: The Internet ecosystem: <http://www.internetsociety.org/who-makes-internet-work-internet-ecosystem>
- The Global Internet Report: <http://www.internetsociety.org/doc/global-internet-report>
- The Relationship Between Local Content, Internet Development, and Access Prices: <http://www.internetsociety.org/localcontent>
- The Internet Exchange Point Toolkit & Best Practices Guide: <http://www.internetsociety.org/ixptoolkitguide>
- Assessment of the impact of Internet exchange points (IXPs) – empirical study of Kenya and Nigeria: <http://www.internetsociety.org/ixpimpact>
- Lifting Barriers to Internet Development in Africa: suggestions for improving connectivity: <http://www.internetsociety.org/doc/lifting-barriers-internet-development-africa-suggestions-improving-connectivity>
- Connectivity in Latin America and the Caribbean: The Role of Internet Exchange Points: <http://www.internetsociety.org/doc/connectivity-lac-ixp-study>

