Trends in the Information Society

David Souter

ict Development Associates

david.souter@runbox.com

Reviewing WSIS+10: three questions

❑ To what extent has 'people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented Information Society' developed in the ten years since WSIS, and how have WSIS outcomes contributed towards this?

❑ What are the major challenges that have inhibited the emergence of a 'people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented Information Society', and how effectively are these being addressed?

❑ What should be the priorities for stakeholders seeking to achieve WSIS outcomes and progress towards the Information Society in the Post-2015 Development Agenda?

ict Development Associates Ltd.

WSIS in context

❑ The changing international environment

    ❑ globalisation of economic production

    ❑ economic recession

    ❑ geographic shifts in economic power

    ❑ demographic growth

    ❑ education and cultural change

    ❑ environmental challenges, including climate change

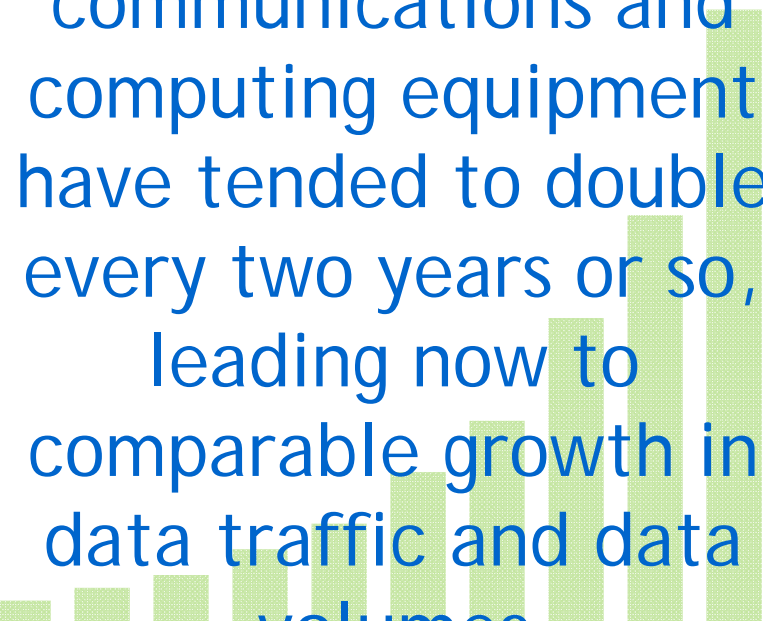   ❑ changing development priorities

ict Development Associates Ltd.

WSIS in context:
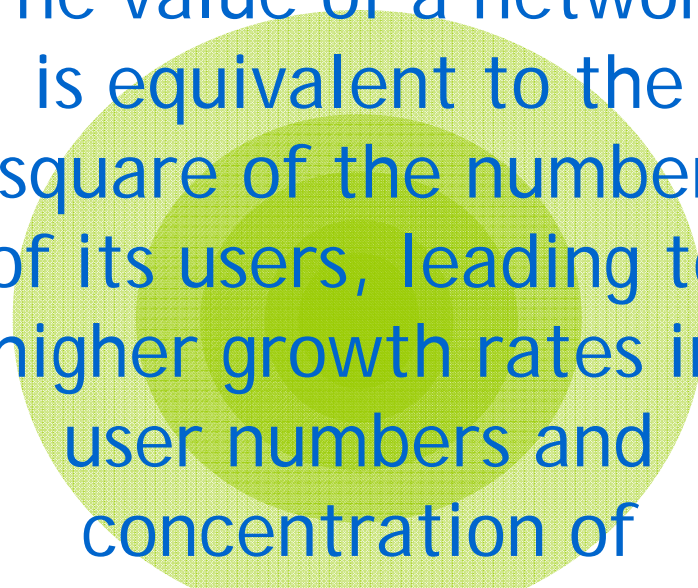# trends in technology and markets

Moore's Law

The capabilities of communications and computing equipment have tended to double every two years or so, leading now to comparable growth in data traffic and data volumes
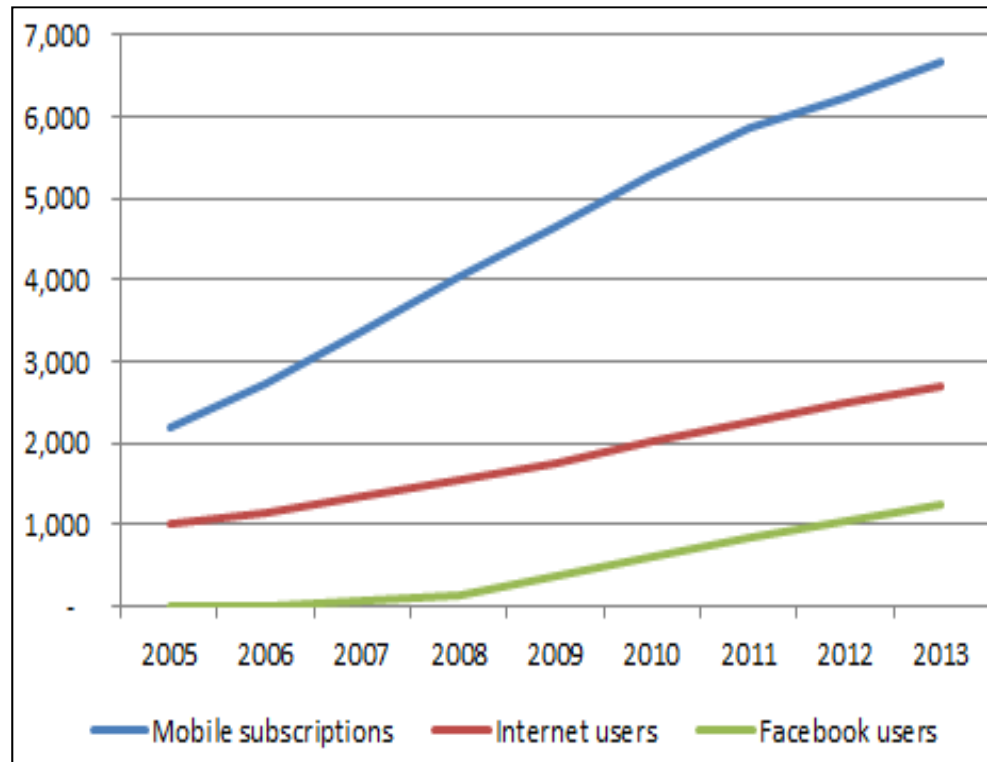
Metcalfe's Law

The value of a network is equivalent to the square of the number of its users, leading to higher growth rates in user numbers and concentration of information resources

ict Development Associates Ltd.

WSIS in context: rates of growth in mobile, Internet and social networks

Millions of users of mobile phones, Internet and Facebook, 2005-2013

Legend: Mobile subscriptions — Internet users — Facebook users

WSIS in context

❑ ICTs in the development agenda

❑ Aspirations for ICT potential expressed in WSIS outcome documents and other fora

❑ but

❑ Limited inclusion in current debates concerning SDGs and the Post-2015 Development Agenda

ict Development Associates Ltd.

Three lenses for looking at progress towards WSIS outcomes

Trends in technology and markets –
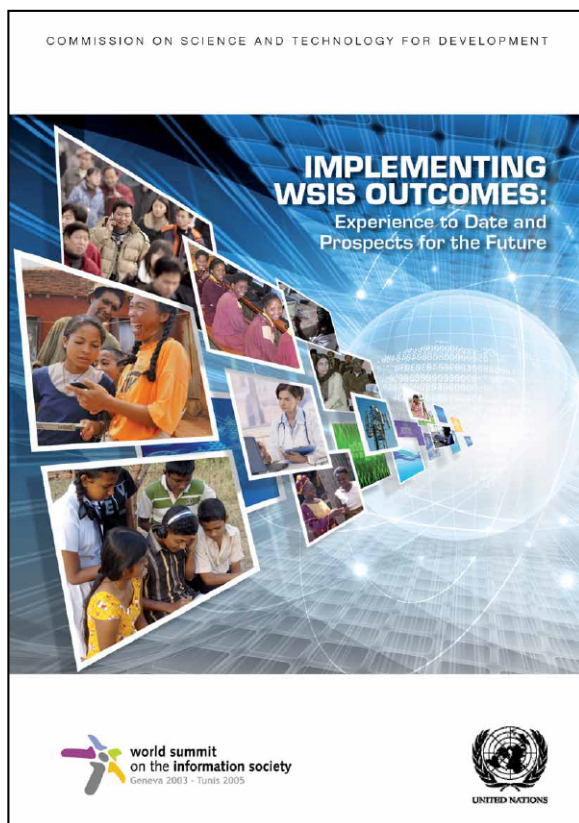
the development of ICTs

Impacts on development sectors -

ICT4D (ICTs for development)

Impacts on society as a whole –

the development of an Information Society

ict Development Associates Ltd.

'New themes in changing times' identified in the CSTD 5-year review

COMMISSION ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY FOR DEVELOPMENT

IMPLEMENTING WSIS OUTCOMES:
Experience to Date and Prospects for the Future

world summit on the information society
Geneva 2003 - Tunis 2005

UNITED NATIONS

1. the transition to **mobility** in access to basic telecommunications
2. the transition to **broadband** at the core of network and future service provision
3. the emergence of **cloud computing**
4. the emergence of **value-added mobile services, mobile transactions and mobile Internet**
5. the emergence of **social networking** and other user-generated content and services

ict Development Associates Ltd.

'Emerging trends' identified in the Issues Paper, CSTD intersessional

Trends in technology and markets –

the development of ICTs

1. the **datafication** of business and government organisation and practice
2. **big data analysis** and related developments including social media analytics, open data, crowdsourcing and citizen science
3. the rapid development of cloud computing and emergence of the **cloud economy**
4. the development of the **Internet of Things**
5. the development of **smart systems**

ict Development Associates Ltd.

Impacts on development sectors

Impacts on development sectors -

ICT4D (ICTs for development)

❑ Important issues include:
  ❑ individual sectors and national strategies
  ❑ distinguishing between potential and achievement
  ❑ attribution of outcomes
  ❑ importance of infrastructure, enabling legal and regulatory frameworks and strategic policymaking
  ❑ difficulty of measuring and evaluating outcomes

ict Development Associates Ltd.

Impact on society as a whole

Impacts on society as a whole –

the development of an Information Society

❑ The WSIS vision:

... a people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented Information Society, where everyone can create, access, utilise and share information and knowledge, enabling individuals, communities and peoples to achieve their full potential in promoting their sustainable development and improving their quality of life ...

ict Development Associates Ltd.

The emerging Information Society

- globalisation of production, distribution and consumption
- virtualisation of goods
- near-ubiquitous real-time communications
- access to information and expression
- changing relationships between citizens
- changing relationships between citizen and state
- bypass of traditional norms
- environmental impacts

Three key points

1. The Information Society is both an observable phenomenon and an aspirational vision.

2. The Information Society is not an issue of technological development or human development, but of the interface between the two.

3. It is outcomes that must be assessed, as well as inputs, if we are to understand the progress that is being made.

ict Development Associates Ltd.

Thankyou

David Souter

ict Development Associates

Telephone: +44 20 8467 1148

Cellphone: +44 7764 819974

Skype: davidsouter

Email: david.souter@runbox.com