

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

**Twenty-sixth session
Geneva, 27-31 March 2023**

**Submissions from entities in the United Nations system, international
organizations and other stakeholders on their efforts in 2022 to
implement the outcomes of the WSIS**

Submission by

United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs

This submission was prepared as an input to the report of the UN Secretary-General on "Progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society at the regional and international levels" (to the 26th session of the CSTD), in response to the request by the Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 2006/46, to the UN Secretary-General to inform the Commission on Science and Technology for Development on the implementation of the outcomes of the WSIS as part of his annual reporting to the Commission.

DISCLAIMER: The views presented here are the contributors' and do not necessarily reflect the views and position of the United Nations or the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.



Report on the Implementation of the Outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS)

(January – December 2022)

United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA)

The United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) through the Division for Public Administration and Development Management (DPADM) serves as facilitator for the implementation of and follow-up to the action lines:

- C1 - The role of public governance authorities and all stakeholders in the promotion of ICTs for development
- C7 - ICT Applications: E-government
- C11 - International and regional cooperation

I - Summary	1
II. Analytical overview of trends and experiences	1
III. Future actions	4

I - Summary

As the leading facilitator for Action Lines C1, C7eGov, and C11, as a member of the United Nations Group on the Information Society (UNGIS), and the institutional manager of the IGF Secretariat¹, UNDESA continued its efforts to promote policy dialogue and advocacy among United Nations bodies, governmental and non-governmental stakeholders and partners for the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS). UNDESA has ensured a comprehensive exchange of views, information and experiences among WSIS stakeholders; and has provided advisory services and technical assistance to developing countries.

II. Analytical overview of trends and experiences

UN DESA organized a [facilitation meeting](#) on WSIS Action Lines C1 (promotion of ICTs for development), C7 (e-Government) and C11 (international and regional collaboration) on 30 May 2022 during the in person final week of the World Summit on Information Society (WSIS) Forum 2022. The session focused on the role of government and other stakeholders in promoting the use of ICTs for development as well as international and regional cooperation. In particular, the session highlighted e-government initiatives at national and local levels and how to create synergies and partnerships between the two. After an overview of the global e-government situation by UN DESA including the situation in cities, national governments, city officials, and UN agencies shared their experiences in aligning national and local e-government initiatives. Panelists shared concerns about inclusiveness including digital divides

¹ <http://www.intgovforum.org/>

within cities, interoperability between city and national portals, usage of city portals, and impact of these portals on residents. It was noted there is further need for collaboration between cities and the UN DESA's Local Online Service Index (LOSI) network which can fill a gap in this area. City officials also highlighted engagement as one of the challenges and sought support on how to engage people in city matters. There was a concrete suggestion on creating working groups studying the impact of a city population on the city e-government portal performance. Panelists also highlighted many opportunities including the application of LOSI methodology in cities in a single country, United for Smart and Sustainable Cities initiative of the UN and its Toolkit on digital transformation for cities, Asia & Pacific Information highway and its activities on rural/urban connectivity.

Global e-government development

UN DESA launched the [United Nations E-Government Survey 2022](#) - The Future of Digital Government on 28 September 2022. The 2022 Survey shows that digital technologies allowed governments to play a key role in addressing the challenges surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic. All regions implemented digital measures, with a majority focusing on distance learning and vaccination services, and others also providing telehealth and online scheduling for medical tests.

The 2022 Survey calls on Governments to strategize and invest more in long-term national digital transformation plans. Meaningful connectivity must be guaranteed for all to help prepare for future crises and shocks. Advances in technology and e-government must ultimately serve the wider goal of supporting sustainable human development—and leaving no one behind.

The United Nations E-Government Survey, published by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, is prepared over a two-year period following an established methodology. It looks at how digital government can facilitate integrated policies and services across 193 UN Member States. The Survey supports countries' efforts to provide effective, accountable and inclusive digital services to all, bridge the digital divide and leave no one behind. In the report of the Secretary-General's High-level Panel on Digital Cooperation, the E-Government Survey is recognized as a key ranking, mapping and measuring tool, supporting the digital transformation of countries.

Local e-government development

The 2022 Survey also continued its study of e-government development at the local level. Despite a digital performance gap between city portals and their national counterparts, most cities have improved their Local Online Service Index (LOSI) scores through greater access to important resources such as a highly skilled workforce, a broad knowledge and skill base, and a dedicated public budget.

Internet Governance Forum

The 17th annual IGF meeting will be hosted by the Government of Ethiopia in Addis Ababa from 28 November to 2 December 2022 on Resilient Internet for a Shared Sustainable and Common Future and on five constituent themes aligned with the Secretary-General's envisioned Global Digital Compact.

Science, Technology and Innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals

The 7th Annual Multi-Stakeholder Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation for the SDGs (STI Forum) (5-6 May) was held under the theme “Science, technology and innovation for building back better from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) while advancing the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”. The STI Forum was an opportunity for governments and multiple stakeholders to exchange new ideas, recommendations and priorities for the upcoming work of ECOSOC and the HLPF with a focus on the role and contributions of science, technology and innovation

High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) 2022

The meeting of the HLPF in 2022 was held from Tuesday, 5 July, to Thursday, 7 July, and from Monday, 11 July, to Friday, 15 July 2022, under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council. This includes the three-day ministerial segment of the forum from Wednesday, 13 July, to Friday, 15 July 2022. The high-level segment of the Council concluded with a final day on Monday, 18 July 2022.

The HLPF adopted the Ministerial Declaration as the outcome of its session.

Para 35 of the Ministerial declaration of the high-level segment of the 2022 session of the Economic and Social Council and the 2022 high-level political forum on sustainable development, convened under the auspices of the Council, on the theme “Building back better from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) while advancing the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” encourages promoting digital technologies, including low- and no-tech strategies, access to broadband Internet and technology devices, connectivity, digital inclusion and literacy and incorporating digital competences into the education system, including with ad hoc investments for teachers and the teaching profession, enhancing digital skills and competences development, including through public investment in digital qualification, specialization in digital technologies, digital economy, digital infrastructure, public policies and institutional development and multi-stakeholder and international collaboration.

Para 134 of the Ministerial declaration highlights role of digital technologies in committing to a responsible and inclusive use of key enablers and multipliers for accelerated action for the Sustainable Development Goals, and also highlights leveraging ICT technology, increasing digital skills and literacy, including media and information literacy, especially in developing countries. Further, it reaffirms that any use of digital technologies must protect and respect the same human rights that people have, offline and online, with special regard given to the protection of children and people in vulnerable situations, in line with relevant regulations.

SDGs and ICT indicators

During 2022, UN DESA served in the steering committee of the Partnership on Measuring ICT for Development. The Partnership is an international, multi-stakeholder initiative that

was launched in 2004 to improve the availability and quality of ICT data and indicators, particularly in developing countries. [Partnership's WSIS 2022 session](#) discussed the latest state of play in tapping into innovative data sources and multi-stakeholder collaboration to provide timely and relevant statistics on 2 June during the annual WSIS Forum. This session of the World Summit on the Information Society Forum 2022 covered presentations on the use of Artificial Intelligence in government, mobile phone big data use applications and five principles for maintaining trust in this innovative data source, as well as a discussion on scanner data or web scraping (for business statistics). These innovative data sources have the potential to make an important link in the data ecosystem within both the public and private sectors, alongside traditional forms of data sources.

III. Future actions

In 2023, UN DESA will conduct the preparatory work for the upcoming United Nations E-Government Survey 2024 to continue to support governments in their journey in e-government development. E-government is not an end; it is a means to improving public service delivery, increasing people's engagement, enhancing transparency, accountability and inclusion, and ultimately making life better for all. E-government has an increasingly important role to play in supporting countries as they endeavour to activate the Decade of Action and accelerate the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

UN DESA will also continue to facilitate international and regional collaboration and promote ICTs. The way forward is a new "digital normal" in responding to global challenges and pursuing sustainable development. In that regard, the next edition of the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) is expected to take place in Japan during the third quarter of 2023. UN DESA, as institutional home to the IGF, will continue to support the Secretary-General to convene the annual IGF meetings as mandated by the General Assembly, and to support the IGF itself, as the key platform for dialogue on Internet governance.