



22 October 2024

13:30 – 14:45

Onsite (lunch provided)

Side event at [CSTD 2024-2025 Inter-sessional Panel](#)

Exploring innovative financing mechanisms for community-centred connectivity: A WSIS+20 agenda to leave no one behind

Background

The WSIS outcomes in 2005, i.e. Tunis Agenda, recognized the need for financing mechanisms to ensure “a people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented Information Society, where everyone can create, access, utilize and share information”. Acknowledging the progress towards achieving that vision, after more than 20 years of deployments in developing countries, and despite the increase in investment from public funding sources, traditional telecommunication and mobile network operators have yet to meet universal access goals.

Within this context, the critical role of community-centred connectivity initiatives are gaining increasing attention as strategies to close the digital gap. These initiatives are driven by completely different investment imperatives, bringing unique assets to the economic calculus of deployment, and have the added advantage of bringing many important social and economic benefits to the community.

While the Tunis Agenda clearly stated the importance of “[h]elping to accelerate the development of domestic financial instruments, including by supporting [...] networking initiatives based on local communities”, the financial resources and mechanisms have been insufficient to help such initiatives scale to the size of the problem. However, recent years have seen examples of innovative financing mechanisms that are better fit-for-purpose and that could support the full potential of community-centred connectivity in bridging digital divides.





Objective

Explore how innovative financing mechanisms for community-centred connectivity can help address persistent digital and developmental divides and how they can be enabled in the WSIS+20 agenda.

Target participants

Governments, United Nations Agencies, Civil society, Academia and Research institutions

Topics for the discussion

- What are community-centred connectivity initiatives and how they contribute to diversify economies in a world of accelerated digitalization?
- Are community-centred connectivity initiatives an innovative financing mechanism in themselves, and if so, what can government and financial institutions do to enable them?
- How can the UN's work on Financing for Development help inform the WSIS+20 Agenda?

Contact

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