

Progress on WSIS Outcomes & the Road to WSIS+20 : African Region's Perspective

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PROPOSED KEY MOMENTS



INTRODUCTION - WSIS

- Context of WSIS (World Summit on the Information Society)
- Brief overview of the original WSIS held in 2003 (Geneva) and 2005 (Tunis)
- **Key goals:** bridging the digital divide, building an inclusive information society, fostering internet governance, and promoting ICTs for development
- Purpose of WSIS+20: Reflecting on Two Decades of Progress: Assessing Challenges, Opportunities, and the Future of ICT and the Information Society since the Geneva Plan of Action

AFRICA WSIS REVIEW: ANNUAL REVIEW & ROADMAP TO WSIS+20

- The Africa WSIS Annual Review Workshop, convened by the UNECA in collaboration with the Government of Tanzania and other key stakeholders.
 - **9-11 October 2024 , Dar es Salaam, Tanzania**
 - A diverse group of **150 participants**, both online and in-person, comprised Parliamentarians, international organizations, RECs, civil society, academia, government, private sector, technical community, and continental organizations.
 - Representatives of **37 Member States**
 - **Additionally, hosted a regional CSTD Open Consultation**
- **Valuable insights and recommendations** on critical issues faced by African countries , helping to shape the future direction of the WSIS



UNECA'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE GDC - **NEGOTIATIONS & POST-SUMMIT IMPLEMENTATION**

- UNECA plays a pivotal role in advancing the WSIS vision through its strong partnerships with the African Union Commission (AUC), RECs and other stakeholders, fostering a people-centered, inclusive, and development-oriented Information Society.
- Coordination and development of the Policy Declaration on the Africa Contribution to the Global Digital compact;
- Supporting the implementation of the World Summit on Information Society (WSIS) 11 Action Lines;
- Developed of harmonised model policy and legal frameworks for the digital society, for example, guidelines for a model law on computer-enabled crimes in African Union Member states;

CHALLENGES & ACHIEVEMENTS - WSIS (2005-2024)

▪ **Regional Highlights (Africa):**

- Africa has the biggest digital divide compared to the rest of the world at 37% internet access compared to 67% global average; the gender internet access gap is 10%.
- Insufficient infrastructure, particularly in rural and remote areas
- Digital infrastructure constraints and related energy supply gaps negatively impact development of the digital society and thus need for collaborative action/s to realise the desired AU Agenda 2063 vision;
- Emerging technologies may result in the continent falling further behind unless an enabling environment and deliberate collaborative policy actions are taken to address the gaps and ensure that these technologies contribute to socioeconomic transformation envisaged in the AU Agenda 2063 development vision;
- Limited digital literacy and capacity-building opportunities
- Addressing gender gaps in access to ICT and cybersecurity initiatives

KEY OUTCOME-

DAR ES SALAM DECLARATION ON AFRICA WSIS +20



KEY MESSAGES

- enhancing coordination between Africa's governance frameworks, digital initiatives, and global governance processes - such as WSIS, IGF, GDC, and other multistakeholder forums - is vital for shaping a cohesive digital future.
- Strengthening digital infrastructure, developing e-government solutions, and establishing robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms for WSIS Action Lines and GDC objectives
- Artificial Intelligence (AI) and innovations in generative AI have transformative potential to boost African economies through effective financial inclusion, employment creation and enhanced public service delivery.
- Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) is vital for Africa's development, driving sustainable growth, innovation, improved governance, and inclusive access to healthcare, education, and finance, while promoting environmental sustainability.
- Data Privacy and Security: Advocate for the development of strong legal and regulatory frameworks to protect personal data and ensure cybersecurity, fostering trust in the digital environment
- Capacity Building: the need for investment in digital skills training and education to empower individuals and communities, enabling them to participate actively in the digital economy.



WAY FORWARD: ENHANCING AFRICA'S PARTICIPATION IN THE WSIS+20 REVIEW PROCESS

- Africa's meaningful engagement in the WSIS+20 Review is crucial for shaping an inclusive digital future, driving sustainable development, and amplifying African voices in global digital governance
- Fostering Multi-Stakeholders Collaboration
- UNECA has joined a unified WSIS+20 review preparatory process, bringing together key UN agencies, including ITU, UNESCO, UNDP, UNCTAD, UN DESA, UN CSTD, and UN Regional Commissions.
- This collaborative effort will facilitate a comprehensive assessment of WSIS's impact and inform the alignment with the GDC

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