

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

**Twenty-eighth session  
Geneva, 7-11 April 2025**

**Submissions from entities in the United Nations system, international organizations and other stakeholders on the progress made in the implementation of the outcomes of the WSIS during the past 20 years**

**Submission by**

United Nations Industrial Development Organization

This submission was prepared as an input to the report of the CSTD secretariat that will inform the substantive discussion at the CSTD on the progress made in the implementation of the outcomes of the WSIS during the past 20 years during its 28<sup>th</sup> annual session in April 2025, in response to the request by the Economic and Social Council, in its resolution E/RES/2023/3, to the CSTD to conduct such substantive discussions and to report thereon, through the Economic and Social Council, to the General Assembly.

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

# United Nations Commission on Science and Technology for Development

## Twenty years in the implementation of outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS)

### WSIS+20 Reporting Template

Name of organization: UNIDO

Name of respondent: Ana Paula Nishio de Sousa

Role of respondent: Chief of Digital Transformation and Artificial Intelligence Division

Date of response: 22 November 2024

#### **I. What is your organisation's formal role and responsibilities concerning WSIS implementation?**

- a. Mandates of your organization relevant to the WSIS implementation

Innovation and Industry are in UNIDO's mandate and main areas of work. Industry 4.0, digital transformation and AI, e.g., affect key industrial developments. The combination of ICTs and manufacturing industries have in the past shown the massive boost they play for the adoption of ICTs in general.

- b. Brief History of your organization's contribution to the World Summit on the information Society (WSIS)

UNIDO has organized events during several WSIS Forums over the past years and interacts on all levels with relevant WSIS stakeholders.

- c. Implementation processes and initiatives within your organization and/or in partnership with other organisations

#### **II. What have been your organization's main contributions to the direct implementation of the WSIS outcomes and related areas of digital development since the Summit, particularly since 2015?**

- a. WSIS Action Lines (as lead, co-facilitator or supporting participant)

C3 Access to information and knowledge

C4 Capacity Building

C6 Enabling Environment

b. WSIS-related projects

190347: Development of an innovation system and its support infrastructure in Azerbaijan

210259: Establishment of cross-border interoperable infrastructure node in Tanzania

170017: Promoting sustainable bush-processing value chains in Namibia

210092: Strengthening Implementation Design of Artificial Intelligence (AI) EcoSystem in Jordan

210021: Industry 4.0 to foster youth employment in Tunisia and Côte d'Ivoire

c. Indicators used to measure the impact of ICT in the achievement of the SDGs in your organization's area of work.

UNIDO's integrated results and performance frameworks (IRPF) tracks, among other things, adoption of new technologies in its technical cooperation projects. This enables a level of understanding of where projects upgrade existing company technology infrastructure. Separate reporting on ICT specific technologies can be highlighted. SDG trackers are also part of the IRPF and with SDG 9 specifically tracked, which also includes innovation and technology.

d. What assessment has your organization made of its engagement in WSIS-related work and digital development in its areas of responsibility?

The current international landscape is challenging for the international community since cooperation frameworks are not working as efficiently as they could. Moreover, the new wave of technologies currently being introduced make it ever more difficult for small players to enter markets and threaten those that have carved out a niche for them. E.g. in countries where a Global Value Chain driven development model was applied it becomes increasingly difficult to compete against companies bringing production closer to consumption centres.

**III. What does your organization see as the main achievements, problems and emerging issues arising from WSIS and from digital development in its areas of responsibility since the Summit, particularly since 2015?**

a. What have been the main achievements of WSIS and digital development?

Awareness for digital technologies in development cooperation has been increased and critical shortcomings documented. Among them the digital divide, which was known, but barely analyzed in a systematic manner. However, despite success in analytical work, more must be done, particularly for accessing finance that would give ICT related developments a major boost in many countries across the globe.

b. What problems, obstacles and constraints have been encountered?

Some mechanisms are inherently slow, which in the case of deployment and adoption of ICTs means opportunities lost for countries. Institutional cooperation on WSIS related projects could be improved. Even today, technology development is strongly biased against women and disadvantaged groups. Without conscious choices, AI will not magically eliminate biases.

c. What new opportunities and challenges have emerged over the years since WSIS which need to be addressed?

New technologies that have dramatically increased in speed of development and adoption clearly show the limits of international processes. Some of the fast-paced developments in industrialized countries is threatening some of the development achievements since they can't keep up and therefore lose economic opportunities. Digital technologies have the potential to create opportunities for women to lead, participate in, and benefit from technology developments. However, without the right policy enablers, digital technologies can reinforce gender stereotypes and deepen economic and social exclusion.

**IV. Lessons learned in the implementation of the Summit outcomes in your organisation's specific areas of responsibility.**

**V. Observations or recommendations concerning the future of WSIS and digital development, taking into account the outcomes of the Summit of the Future in September 2024.**

WSIS Action lines should definitely be aligned with the Objectives of the GDC, which was already done, but also for the upcoming implementation period, the interaction and some of the WSIS cooperation mechanisms should not only inform, but shape the way GDC is being implemented.

**VI. Please identify publications, reports and other documents by your organisation which you consider can contribute to the work of the review.**

[Gender, Digital transformation and artificial intelligence](#)

[Mapping the use of artificial intelligence in Ukraine](#)

[Empowering Digital Transformation in Small Enterprises Through National Policies: An International Benchmarking](#)

[Standards & Digital Transformation: Good Governance in a Digital Age](#)

[DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION STRATEGY IN ACTION: DEVELOPING A ROADMAP TOWARDS THE FOURTH INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION IN AFRICA](#)

[IID Policy Brief 12: Bridging the AI divide: Empowering developing countries through manufacturing](#)

- [Industrial Development Report 2024 \(Chapters 3 and 4, Boxes 5.3, 5.4, 6.3, 6.4, 7.3, 7.4, 8.3 and 8.4\)](#)

- [Industrial Development Report 2020](#)

**Useful reference links:**

Geneva and Tunis outcome documents from WSIS -

<https://www.itu.int/net/wsis/outcome/booklet/index.html>

The General Assembly's ten-year review report -

<https://publicadministration.un.org/wsis10/Portals/5/N1543842.pdf>

The CSTD ten-year review - [https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/dtIstict2015d3\\_en.pdf](https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/dtIstict2015d3_en.pdf)

Contributions should be submitted by **15 November 2024** to the CSTD Secretariat at [cstd-wsis20@unctad.org](mailto:cstd-wsis20@unctad.org). They will be made available on the CSTD website for consideration by the Commission unless contributors specifically request that their submissions should not be published.

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