



WSIS Forum 2016

“WSIS Action Lines: Supporting the Implementation of SDGs” Outcomes

World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS)¹

The World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) is a unique two-phase United Nations (UN) summit that was initiated in order to create an evolving multi-stakeholder platform aimed at addressing the issues raised by information and communication technologies (ICTs) through a structured and inclusive approach at the national, regional and international levels. The goal of WSIS is to achieve a common vision, desire and commitment to build a people-centric, inclusive and development-oriented Information Society where everyone can create, access, utilize and share information. The UN General Assembly Resolution 56/183 (21 December 2001) endorsed the holding of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) in two phases. The first phase took place in Geneva from 10 to 12 December 2003 and the second phase took place in Tunis, from 16 to 18 November 2005. In 2003, the number of participants was 11,000 representing 175 countries and in 2005 the number of participants was more than 19,000 representing 174 countries.

The Overall Review of the Implementation of the Outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society was held by UN General Assembly in 2015 that adopted Resolution A/70/125 calling for close alignment between the WSIS process and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, highlighting the crosscutting contribution of information and communications technology (ICT) to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and poverty eradication, and noting that access to information and communications technologies has also become a development indicator and aspiration in and of itself.

WSIS Forum²

Since 2005, and following Para 109 and Para 110 of the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society a cluster of WSIS-related events was held on an annual basis in Geneva. In 2009, the cluster of WSIS-related events was re-branded as WSIS Forum. With time WSIS Forum has proven to be an efficient

¹ www.wsis.org

² www.wsis.org/forum

mechanism for multi-stakeholder implementation of WSIS Action Lines and cross-cutting commitments on gender equality, information exchange, knowledge creation, the sharing of best practices and continues to provide assistance in developing multi-stakeholder and public/private partnerships to achieve the sustainable development goals.

WSIS Forums are organized each year, hosted by the ITU, co-organized by ITU, UNESCO, UNCTAD and UNDP in close collaboration with all WSIS Action Line Facilitators/Co-Facilitators (UNDESA, FAO, UNEP, WHO, UN Women, WIPO, WFP, ILO, WMO, UN, ITC, UPU, UNODC, and UN Regional Commissions).

In 2015, the UN General Assembly Overall Review resolved to hold the WSIS Forum on the annual basis till 2025. UNGA also called for close alignment between WSIS and SDG process.

Moreover on the occasion of the UNGA review heads of the UN Agencies decided that beyond 2015 WSIS Forum can serve as a key forum for discussing the role of ICTs as a means of implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and targets, with due regard to the global mechanism for follow-up and review of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as set out in General Assembly resolution A/70/1.

The WSIS-SDG Matrix³ developed by UN WSIS Action Line Facilitators serves as the mechanism to map, analyse and coordinate the implementation of WSIS Action Lines, and more specifically, ICTs as enablers and accelerators of the SDGs.

Information on all past WSIS Forums is available at <http://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2016/Previous/>

WSIS Forum 2016

Following the UN General Assembly Resolution A/70/125, calling for close alignment of the WSIS and SDG process as well as holding the WSIS Forum on the annual basis, the WSIS Forum 2016 was held from the 2-6 May 2016 at the ITU Headquarters in Geneva and the overall theme of the WSIS Forum 2016 was “*WSIS Action Lines: Supporting the Implementation of SDGs*”.

WSIS Forum 2016 attracted more than 1800 WSIS Stakeholders from more than 140 countries onsite and more than 800 remote participants from 85 countries. High-level representatives from the wider WSIS stakeholder community graced the event, among these, more than 85 ministers and deputies, including the Prime Minister of Tonga, ambassadors, CEOs and civil society leaders, who contributed passionately towards the programme of the Forum and its annual theme. The WSIS Forum 2016 was chaired by H.E. Ambassador Daniel Sepulveda, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State and U.S. Coordinator for International Communications and Information Policy (USA), who played a key role in providing high-level guidance for the Forum's outcomes.

³ www.wsis.org/sdg

Within the framework of the High-Level Track, officials of the WSIS Stakeholder community, representing the government, private sector, civil society, academia, technical community and international organizations were given opportunity to provide their insights on the WSIS Action Lines, the outcomes of the UNGA Overall Review and the submissions received during the open consultation process. The High-Level Track was opened with the *High-Level Strategic Dialogue on WSIS Action Lines and SDGs*, followed by 17 High-Level Policy Sessions which took place on the 3rd and 4th of May. In addition, a Ministerial Roundtable provided an opportunity for more than 60 ministers and deputies to discuss national approaches aimed at strengthening the national development plans, and the role of ICTs, in particular WSIS Action Lines, as enablers of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Building on the open consultation process, more than 150 thematic sessions were held during the WSIS Forum 2016, aligned with the overall theme of the WSIS Forum 2016. This provided a vibrant atmosphere for facilitation and exchange on a multistakeholder vision of the WSIS Process towards achieving SDGs. An exhibition space also provided the perfect atmosphere to network, learn and share.

Key outcomes of the WSIS Forum 2016 include the following:

- **[WSIS Forum 2016: Outcome Document](#)**

This document provides a summary of more than 150 sessions organized during the Forum Track of the WSIS Forum 2016. Each session shows a direct linkage between the WSIS Action Lines and the respective SDGs (please see the WSIS Forum 2016: WSIS Action Lines and SDGs Matrix). The Forum track is the result of the multistakeholder Open Consultation Process.

- **[WSIS Forum 2016: High Level Track Outcomes and Executive Brief](#)**

This document provides a summary of each high-level moderated session by the respective High level Track Facilitators and lists thematically all the Policy Statements submitted by the Ministers, Regulators, Heads of UN Agencies, Academia, Leaders from the Civil Society and Technical Community. The key role played by ICTs in Enabling the SDGs is very clear in the statements made by the policy makers.

- **[WSIS Action Lines Supporting Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals \(2016\)](#)**

This document has been developed by the WSIS Action Line Facilitators and identifies the key linkages of the Action Line with the SDGs, providing case examples.

- **[WSIS Stocktaking Report 2016](#)**

The eighth edition of the WSIS Stocktaking Report Series, focuses on contributions by stakeholders worldwide to WSIS and Sustainable Development Goals. It emphasizes achievements, highlights trends and draws conclusions consistent with the action lines

referenced in the Geneva Plan of Action. This Report provides key findings on emerging trends in the development of the information society, and references major activities being implemented in the eighteen areas covered by the eleven WSIS Action Lines.

- **[WSIS Stocktaking Success Stories 2016](#)**

This report highlights 18 winning projects of the WSIS Prizes 2016 contest that provides a platform for identification and showcasing success stories across the WSIS Action Lines defined in the Geneva Plan of Action. The WSIS Prizes honour outstanding projects that leverage the power of information and communication technology to accelerate achievement of sustainable development goals.

- **[WSIS Forum 2016 and SDG Matrix](#)**

This document builds upon the WSIS-SDG Matrix and provides guidance on the outcomes of more than 100 sessions held during the forum, emphasizing linkages between the WSIS Action Lines and SDGs as well as highlighting rationale for each linkage that has been established.



All WSIS Forum 2016 Outcomes, photo and video documentation and highlights are available at www.wsis.org/forum.