

Fact Sheet: WSIS+20

What is WSIS+20?

The World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) is a global initiative that aims to foster dialogue, collaboration, and promotion of information and communication technologies as aligned with the UN [sustainable development goals](#) (SDGs) and human rights. The WSIS twenty-year review will build on the 2005 [Tunis Agenda](#), the 2015 [WSIS+10 outcomes](#), and the [Global Digital Compact](#) (GDC) adopted as part of the UN Pact for the Future in 2024.

For decades, the WSIS has served as a platform to advance multistakeholder collaboration and achieve a “*people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented information society*,” through the [WSIS Action Lines](#) framework and [Internet Governance Forum](#) (IGF).

What’s at Stake?

As the UN is about to start reassessing the WSIS principles, the main challenge will be to preserve and build upon a model that has successfully delivered positive outcomes for decades. There has been significant progress in advancing connectivity, as close to 700 million people were globally connected in 2003, compared to 5.8 billion today.

What is at stake is not only the future of the multistakeholder approach, which is essential to Internet governance and digital cooperation. Concerns about unequal participation, especially from developing countries, about the impact of digitalisation on their economies and societies and the extent to which developing countries will have a say in how digital society develops highlight broader global inequalities. These must be met during the review with further capacity, transparency, and resources provided to ensure the model truly reflects the global Information Society.

Renewed collective efforts are urgently needed to connect those unconnected, bridge the widening digital divides, and prepare for tomorrow's technologies in a more equitable way. Although the WSIS Action Lines remain relevant today, we must revitalise cooperation and strengthen multistakeholder participation to address global challenges more effectively. Renewing both the WSIS framework and the IGF’s mandate is a key priority.

WSIS+20 provides a critical opportunity to reaffirm the foundational principles of an open, inclusive, and secure Internet. This is a pivotal moment to ensure the Internet continues to serve as a catalyst for innovation, inclusive growth, and empowerment while fostering future governance that promotes universal access, resilience, and trust.

To create effective governance mechanisms that can support future technological developments, it is crucial to have a clear understanding of the Internet’s technical architecture and the essential role of community-driven technical governance. This understanding will be instrumental to fostering the collective effort needed to address persistent digital divides and ensure progress towards achieving the SDGs.

Key Milestones & Next Steps

The WSIS+20 review was kick-started with the “open consultation process” held in 2024 and the adoption of the [Progress Report on the implementation of the outcomes of the WSIS](#) by the UN Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD) in April 2025.

On 25 March, the UNGA adopted the [WSIS+20 Review Modalities](#). On 23 April, the UNGA President [appointed](#) two co-facilitators to lead the review of the implementation of the WSIS outcome. Individual UN Agencies will also undertake their own reviews.

Key milestones ahead include the WSIS Forum High-Level Event in Geneva from 7-11 July and the two-day High-Level UN General Assembly (UNGA) meeting in New York, scheduled for December 2025, where a resolution should be agreed upon.



The Way Forward: Renew the WSIS and IGF Mandates

The WSIS+20 review provides a crucial opportunity to reaffirm the WSIS Action Lines and strengthen their alignment with SDGs. It is a key moment to solidify the role of the IGF, the institution WSIS created, notably with a permanent mandate, to continue to act as “the premier platform for Internet governance discussion” as outlined in the GDC. The WSIS mechanism, including the IGF, can serve as an effective vehicle to implement the GDC Principles and Commitments.

A renewed permanent IGF mandate, alongside a reinforced WSIS mechanism and the enduring relevance of technology-neutral Action Lines, will establish a stable, inclusive platform for continued dialogue, shared responsibility, and alignment with broader frameworks like the GDC and the SDGs.

In particular, IGF multistakeholder National, Regional, and Youth initiatives (NRIs) can be strategically leveraged to collect information, gather insights, and monitor progress towards SDGs and 2030 targets. Since 2006, the IGF has evolved into a living and dynamic global ecosystem of 176 NRIs. In addition, the work of Dynamic Coalitions, Best Practice Fora, Schools of Internet Governance, and Policy Networks Initiatives demonstrate the IGF’s expansive and intersessional reach well beyond its annual global forum.