1. What are the most important **achievements** arising from WSIS that should be highlighted in the Zero Draft? *

The most transformative achievements for the Caribbean region arising from WSIS include:

1. Catalyst for digital transformation - WSIS inspired and sustained national and regional digital transformation efforts in the Caribbean. It provided a global framework that many Caribbean nations used to guide the development of national ICT policies and digital agendas. This enabled countries to structure planning processes around inclusive connectivity, digital government, education, health, and innovation.

2. Establishment of National, Regional and International Internet Governance For a - The Caribbean Internet Governance Policy Framework, a key outcome of the Caribbean Internet Governance Forum (CIGF) since 2005, is a non-binding guide for Caribbean governments, regulators, and civil society. It addresses issues such as cybersecurity, privacy, broadband deployment, data governance, and digital inclusion, and has influenced national ICT and digital transformation policies in Trinidad and Tobago, Jamaica, and Barbados.

The inclusive, multistakeholder approach of the IGF process promotes regional and extra-regional collaboration. Participation in forums like the LACIGF and global IGF has strengthened Caribbean stakeholder capacity in areas such as spectrum management, net neutrality, data protection, and critical infrastructure resilience, especially in smaller states.

These forums also support the sharing of values and best practices, advancing national development. Through WSIS action lines, IG initiatives contribute to policy harmonisation, promotion of mobile Internet for connectivity, digital entrepreneurship for economic growth, use of ICTs for disaster preparedness, and enhanced capacity building and knowledge sharing for inclusive digital progress.

3. Trusted Multistakeholder Platforms - WSIS formalised multistakeholder participation through the WSIS Forum and the IGF. These platforms enabled Caribbean actors—from youth to regulators—to engage in global dialogue and raise SIDS-specific concerns in international ICT policymaking.

4. Global Technical Guidance by the ITU - The ITU's leadership in developing technical standards and infrastructure development processes has been instrumental. Caribbean countries have benefitted from the ITU's technical assistance and capacity-building programmes that support spectrum management, broadband rollout, and regulatory development.

2. What are the most important **challenges** to the achievement of WSIS outcomes to date and in the future that need to be addressed in the Zero Draft? *

Challenges that threaten WSIS progress in the Caribbean and need to be address in the Zero Draft include:

1. Competing National Priorities and Limited Fiscal Space - Caribbean countries, many of which are high debt middle-income SIDS, must balance investments in ICT with urgent social, economic, and climate resilience needs. Digital transformation remains underfunded despite its cross-sectoral importance.

2. Geopolitical Pressures and Global Governance Gaps - Fragmentation in the global digital order and limited Caribbean representation in standard-setting or AI governance forums hampers the region's ability to shape norms, especially regarding data governance, digital taxation, and content moderation.

3. Cybersecurity - A rise in sophisticated cyber threats, limited cyber capacity, and growing misinformation undermine digital trust and social cohesion. Many Caribbean countries lack the legislative and technical infrastructure to respond effectively.

4. Digital Divide and Skills Gap - Inequities in access, affordability, and digital skills—especially among women, youth, rural populations, indigenous communities, and older persons—persist across the region. Emerging divides (e.g., AI access) risk deepening these gaps.

5. Environmental Impacts of Technology – The growing environmental impact resulting from emissions, electronic waste, and unsustainable ICT practices; policy and regulatory incoherence driven by fragmented frameworks and gaps in digital governance; and weak monitoring mechanisms, largely due to the absence of clear targets and the fragmentation of relevant data sources, remain a persistent challenge to the Caribbean.

3. What are the most important **priorities** for action to achieve the WSIS vision of a 'people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented Information Society' in the future, taking into account emerging trends? *

Key priorities for action include:

1. Sustaining and enhancing the WSIS multistakeholder model by institutionalising equitable multistakeholder participation in Internet governance and AI policymaking; strengthening engagement between governments and stakeholders including youth, academia, women's organisations, and the private sector; and ensuring that Caribbean voices are amplified in global forums and norm-shaping dialogues.

2. Promoting inclusive governance by ensuring that Caribbean SIDS perspectives are effectively represented in global digital policy dialogues.

3. Expanding WSIS principles to emerging areas such as AI, data governance, and digital public infrastructure; and building capacity in frontier technology through a regional hubs and South-South cooperation.

4. Supporting regional integration and resilience by advancing regional approaches to digital public goods, connectivity infrastructure, and interoperable systems; and embedding climate resilience and green ICT principles in digital strategies.

5. Enhancing monitoring and evaluation, and data capabilities to enable evidence-based tracking of progress and inform targeted interventions.

4. What **additional themes/issues**, if any, should be included in the Elements Paper? *

1. Strengthening Outputs from the IGF - The IGF should evolve to produce more actionable outputs that inform intergovernmental processes. There is room for greater intersessional work, clearer follow-up mechanisms, and structured stakeholder input processes.

2. Recognition of SIDS-Specific Needs – The Elements Paper should include targeted provisions for SIDS, reflecting vulnerabilities related to geography, climate, finance, and scale. SIDS, which are included in the overall category of developing countries, possess unique challenges and needs that require targeted and specific focus.

3. Digital Sovereignty and Local Content - Emphasis should be placed on the importance of digital sovereignty—the region's ability to shape its own digital future, develop local digital industries, and preserve its cultural and linguistic identity in the online environment. This includes the right to determine the use, management, and regulation of digital platforms, content, and infrastructure in a manner that reflects national and regional priorities.

Separately, data governance refers to the frameworks and standards that ensure the responsible, ethical, and secure collection, storage, sharing, and use of data. For the Caribbean, effective data governance must ensure interoperability, protection of individual rights, support for cross-border data flows, and public trust in how data is managed—especially in emerging areas such as AI and digital public infrastructure.

The Elements Paper should provide stronger support for both domains: enabling states to exercise greater agency over their digital ecosystems (digital sovereignty), while simultaneously participating in and influencing global norms on data governance.

4. Data Governance – The current scope should be expanded and framed as universal as it is mentioned in other thematic areas but requires better integration across action lines and is highly relevant as a central theme as it is needed to protect the interests of small states.

5. Consideration should be given to a discussion on whether the term 'information society' is still current or whether other options are more relevant to today's global realities, for example, digital society. This could impact the scope of priority actions need to achieve the WSIS vision of an inclusive future.

5. Do you wish to comment on **particular themes/issues/paragraphs** in the Elements Paper? *

1. Action Line C2 (Infrastructure): The Caribbean has seen significant expansion in connectivity. However, affordability, redundancy, and coverage remain concerns. Greater investment in regional infrastructure (e.g., IXPs, resilient undersea cables) is needed.

2. Action Line C4 (Capacity Building): There is universal recognition of capacity development as critical. The Caribbean calls for targeted, sustained investment in digital literacy, cybersecurity skills, and AI fluency across all age groups and sectors.

3. Action Line C7 (ICT Applications): The digitalisation of health, education, justice, and emergency response has transformed service delivery. However, WSIS+20 must support inclusive, interoperable, and data-protective systems adapted to local realities.

4. Paragraphs 8–9 (Digital Divide & Gender): These should further emphasise intersecting challenges in the small states, where gender, geography, age, and socio-economic status intersect to deepen exclusion. In particular, women in rural areas, youth in low-income communities, and indigenous populations often face compounded barriers to digital access, skills development, and meaningful participation in the digital economy.

5. Paragraphs 25–27 (Environmental Impacts): These must integrate climate-related digital resilience frameworks specifically for SIDS, including promoting green ICT and disaster-proof infrastructure.

6. Paragraphs 70–74 (Artificial Intelligence): Concerns about AI bias, unequal access to computing infrastructure, and lack of representation in AI standards-setting must be addressed through inclusive global partnerships and regionally focused pilots.

7. Paragraph 33 of the Elements Paper acknowledges ongoing efforts to make the internet more multilingual but also observes that "the great majority of Internet content remains, however, in a small number of international languages." To reflect global realities and support digital inclusion, the Paper should be strengthened by explicitly recognising linguistic diversity. For example, the Caribbean is home to a plurality of languages, including English, Spanish, French, Dutch, and multiple creoles. Yet, most of these are underrepresented in the digital space.

8. Human rights and ethical dimensions of the Information Society: The privacy policies presented by online applications should be presented in an easily understood, user-friendly manner that promotes awareness of the type of data being collected from users. This should be established as in international standard of practice.

6. What suggestions do you have to support the development of the **WSIS framework** (WSIS Action Lines, IGF, WSIS Forum, UNGIS etc.)? *

1. Strengthen Alignment with the SDGs - Create a clear mapping between WSIS Action Lines and SDG targets, particularly on poverty, gender, education, decent work, and climate action.

2. Institutional Linkages - Enhance coordination between WSIS, the Global Digital Compact (GDC), and the UN Pact for the Future, ensuring common themes and implementation synergies.

3. Strengthen the IGF - Provide predictable resources to support inclusive participation, especially of developing countries and marginalised communities; and develop mechanisms to translate forum outcomes into UN system-wide recommendations or guidance for national implementation.

4. Support Regional Bodies – Integrate regional organisations, particularly those representing SIDS, into WSIS governance and implementation efforts, enabling them to build national capacity, track progress, and coordinate region-wide policies.

5. Host forums in underrepresented regions: Consider rotating or co-hosting key WSIS events in underrepresented and developing countries. This would help increase visibility, foster inclusivity, and demonstrate tangible support for the involvement of smaller states and underserved communities.

6. Establish clear indicators and progress reports: Introduce standardised metrics to track implementation of WSIS Action Lines and related initiatives, including periodic progress reports. This would support transparency and help stakeholders better measure the real-world impact of WSIS activities.

7. Expand capacity-building initiatives: Prioritise training and support programs for stakeholders in developing countries

7. Do you have any **other** comments? *

1. The Caribbean region is committed to digital transformation that is rights-based, inclusive, resilient, and sustainable. However, realising this vision requires equitable access to funding, knowledge networks, governance spaces, and partnerships.

2. Small states participation must be systemic, not ad hoc, within WSIS mechanisms—particularly on emerging tech governance (AI, data, cybersecurity).

3. Youth involvement should be mainstreamed across WSIS+20 processes and beyond.

8. Who is **submitting** this input? *

Kindly provide the name of the person submitting this input, as well as the associated country, organization, stakeholder type, and relevant contact information

Nia Nanan, Senior Research Analyst, Caribbean Telecommunications Union. Trinidad and Tobago. Regional Intergovernmental Organisation.

9. Please provide your **e-mail** address: *

Please enter an email