Excellencies,

At the outset, the IGF Dynamic Coalitions would like to express their gratitude for the opportunity you gave them to present themselves at the recent IGF annual meeting in Lillestrøm. We would like to recall that the Dynamic Coalitions are independent self-constituted and self-organized bottom-up entities in the IGF ecosystem covering a broad range of issues related to Internet governance. In the Dynamic Coalition Coordination Group (DCCG), they agree on basic principles they all adhere to, such as open memberships, open archives and open mailing lists.

We would like to repeat the point we made at our meeting in Lillestrøm, namely that the IGF should not be seen as an isolated stand-alone annual event, as the WSIS + 20 Elements Paper seems to imply, but as a year-long process with many intersessional components, such as the National and Regional Initiatives, the Best Practice Forums, the Policy Networks and the Dynamic Coalitions. The DCs also contribute to the WSIS Action Lines, the SDGs and the GDC. We express our hope that this will be reflected in the Zero Draft and that the role of the Dynamic Coalitions as engines of innovation, dialogue, co-operation and community driven research and capacity building on some of the most pressing issues in Internet governance will be recognized.

This is a common submission by the DCCG, reflecting a consensus position. We also endorse the common submission by the MAG and the Leadership Panel, in particular their call for a permanent, sustainable, and well-funded IGF mandate. The renewal of the IGF's mandate is essential to ensure an open and inclusive platform for the DC's voluntary engagement.

As we do not coordinate the substantive work of the Dynamic Coalitions, individual Dynamic Coalitions will make their own contribution in their respective area of expertise. Their work covers the broad range of issues contained in the WSIS + 20 Elements Paper. Their contributions are attached at Annex to this submission and do not necessarily reflect a consensus position of the DCCG.

Yours sincerely

The IGF Dynamic Coalitions Coordinating Group

Annex: Submissions by DCs, 10 pages.

. ◆ From Margins to Mainstream: Comments on the WSIS+20 Elements Paper

◆ Dr. Muhammad Shabbir and Judith Hellerstein, IGF Dynamic Coalition on Accessibility and Disability (DCAD)

On 20 June 2025, the WSIS+20 Elements Paper was published as part of the WSIS+20 review process, outlining thematic priorities intended to guide negotiations ahead of the WSIS+20 High-Level Meeting in December 2025 and to inform the drafting of the forthcoming Zero Draft, which will consolidate stakeholder input into actionable proposals.

The position of IGF-DCAD (Internet Governance Forum – Dynamic Coalition on Accessibility and Disability) on the paper is that despite decades of advocacy, the persistent digital divide facing persons with disabilities is only mentioned tangentially throughout the WSIS+20 Elements Paper. Given that over 1.5 billion people globally live with disabilities, there must be a stronger, explicit commitment to digital accessibility woven into every thematic area, in line with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Sustainable Development Goals. Moreover, inclusion must be explicitly defined to encompass accessibility for persons with disabilities as a non-negotiable component of people-centred development, recognizing that people with lived experience of disability bring essential insights and expertise to digital governance.

In this context, outlined below are a set of specific comments from the IGF-DCAD, highlighting key areas where the Elements Paper must better address the needs and inclusion of persons with disabilities.

1. Participation & Capacity Building (paras 4–5, 77–81)

While the document emphasizes capacity building for developing countries, it overlooks targeted programs for persons with disabilities, who often face compounded barriers due to inaccessible education, training, and digital tools. It is essential to:

A. Fund and develop accessible training materials co-created with people with lived experience of disability.
B. Support organizations of persons with disabilities to deliver digital skills programs.
C. Set diversity targets for disability representation in leadership, including in the IGF Multistakeholder Advisory Group.
D. Create mentorship pathways for persons with disabilities, leveraging the lived experience of disability to inform leadership development and participation in Internet governance.
E. Integrate disability indicators into capacity-building monitoring frameworks.

2. ◆ Digital Divides (paras 28–35)

Persistent digital divides cannot be effectively bridged without addressing accessibility barriers as a core cause of exclusion for persons with disabilities. The Elements Paper should call for:

A. Adoption of international accessibility standards (e.g., WCAG 2.1/2.2).
B. Requirements for public and private digital service providers to implement accessibility by design, informed by the perspectives of people with lived experience of disability.
C. Expand the enabling environment section to include critical elements of an enabling environment issues, such as regulations, competition, affordable access, especially for persons with disabilities

3. ◆ Human Rights & Ethical Dimensions (paras 43–50)

The strong emphasis on protecting human rights online is commendable but must recognize the intersectionality of digital rights for persons with disabilities, including:

A. The right to accessible information and communication as foundational to freedom of expression.
B. The heightened risks posed by emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, which can exclude persons with disabilities through biased datasets or inaccessible design.
C. The prevalence of technology-enabled abuse specifically targeting persons with disabilities, including cyberbullying and exploitation.
D. The necessity of involving people with lived experience of disability in designing ethical safeguards to ensure new technologies respect and promote human rights.

4. Building Confidence and Security in the Use of ICT (Paras 51-56)

In the sections on Cybersecurity there are increased challenges posed to cybersecurity and by cybercrime have become substantially more complex and serious since WSIS because of the growing pervasiveness of ICTs, the range of services and transactions now undertaken online, and the extent of data held on individuals and organisations. We need to do more work at promoting cyber resilience with all communities, but with particular focus on persons with disabilities and to better integrate it into the WSIS development agenda.

As it says in Paragraph 53 there is increased concern since WSIS about the use of digital technologies and services for harassment and abuse, including hate speech directed at women and persons with disabilities and at racial and social minorities ….. Here again we should be referencing Persons with disabilities since like all marginalized communities they are often subject to harassment, abuse, and bullying, especially women with disabilities

5. ◆ Internet Governance & IGF (paras 57–64)

The IGF has long been an essential platform for advancing accessibility, including the work of the IGF Dynamic Coalition on Accessibility and Disability. The IGF has demonstrated its key role within WSIS and the digital governance space. The governance of the Internet must continue to be global and multistakeholder in nature, transparent and democratic

The IGF Mandate should be permanently extended and formally recognise the role of local and regional IGFs and the Dynamic Coalitions which play such an important part in promoting inclusion. The IGF must be enabled to fulfil its full mandate. This can only be done if the IGF is backed by a secure and stable funding, combining a mix of core UN funding and voluntary contributions.

The renewed IGF mandate must:

A. Explicitly include the promotion of accessibility and participation of persons with disabilities as a core objective.
B. Prioritize practical measures such as travel fellowships, online accessibility features, and hybrid meeting accommodations to enable active participation of persons with disabilities.
C. Embed accessibility requirements into all IGF processes and structures, ensuring disability-inclusive leadership across national and regional Internet governance initiatives.

D. Encourage the appointment of people with lived experience of disability to leadership positions within the IGF's governance structures, including NRIs, such as the Multistakeholder Advisory Group(s), to ensure their authentic representation.

6. ◆ Artificial Intelligence (paras 70–76)

Artificial intelligence presents both opportunities and serious risks for persons with disabilities. It is vital to:

A. Embed accessibility guidelines in artificial intelligence development standards.
B. Include organizations of persons with disabilities and individuals with lived experience of disability in governance discussions around artificial intelligence to ensure inclusive design.
C. Support capacity building for persons with disabilities to engage in artificial intelligence policy and technical development.

7. ◆ Monitoring and Measurement (paras 82–84)

Digital policy monitoring often omits disability-disaggregated data. The WSIS+20 review must:

A. Incorporate indicators tracking accessibility progress—such as the percentage of websites and apps meeting international accessibility standards and the proportion of persons with disabilities with meaningful internet access—into WSIS+20 monitoring frameworks, designed in consultation with people with lived experience of disability.

8. ◆ Recommendations for the Zero Draft

A. Establish a cross-cutting principle that accessibility is integral to all WSIS+20 objectives.
B. Require disability-disaggregated data collection in connectivity, skills, and digital literacy indicators.
C. Strengthen international cooperation frameworks to support accessible ICT development, especially in the Global South.
D. Allocate financial resources to specifically bridge the digital accessibility gap.
E. Ensure proposals on artificial intelligence and data governance explicitly address inclusive design for persons with disabilities.
F. Include organizations of persons with disabilities and people with lived experience of disability in all multistakeholder consultations, from capacity building to artificial intelligence governance.
G. Set measurable diversity targets for persons with disabilities in Internet governance bodies and create mentorship pathways to build sustainable leadership rooted in lived experience.

9. ◆ Conclusion

The WSIS+20 review presents a historic opportunity to move beyond tokenism and enshrine digital accessibility at the heart of a truly inclusive Information Society. Without explicit commitments and concrete actions for persons with disabilities, and without the active leadership of people with lived experience of disability, the vision of universal, meaningful, and affordable access cannot be realized.

As Coordinator of the IGF Dynamic Coalition on Accessibility and Disability, I urge co-facilitators and all stakeholders to ensure that accessibility and the inclusion of people with lived experience of disability

are not afterthoughts, but core priorities reflected throughout the WSIS+20 outcome documents and in the future mandate of the IGF. Only by doing so can we build a multistakeholder, inclusive governance model that serves the needs of all people and sets a precedent for equitable global digital policymaking.

◆ About the Authors:

Dr. Muhammad Shabbir is a Pakistani researcher, accessibility advocate, and policy expert focusing on digital inclusion and international relations. He is the Coordinator of the IGF Dynamic Coalition on Accessibility and Disability (DCAD) and a member of the IAAP Global Leadership Council. A former trustee of the Internet Society, he led its only board resolution on making the organization accessible for persons with disabilities. He has also engaged with ICANN, APRIGF, APSIG, MEAC-SIG, and PKSIG. Blind since childhood, he brings lived experience to global accessibility efforts.

Judith Hellerstein is a globally recognized expert in ICT policy, regulation, and digital transformation. As the Founder and CEO of Hellerstein & Associates, she leads a consultancy dedicated to unlocking digital economy opportunities worldwide. Judith is a passionate advocate for connectivity and digital inclusion, She has developed Universal Access and Service policies, broadband strategies, and innovative solutions to bridge the digital divide—bringing Internet access to remote and underserved regions.

Judith is the Co-Coordinator of the IGF Dynamic Coalition on Accessibility and Disability (DCAD). She has a long history of strong advocacy on disability and accessibility both within the ITU, the UN, ICANN, ISOC and others.

OER Dynamic Coalition input to the WSIS+20 Elements paper

- Since the introduction of the OER concept at UNESCO's 2002 Forum on Open Courseware, a strong normative foundation has been established—culminating in the UNESCO Recommendation on OER (2019) and the Dubai Declaration on OER (2024)—which has advanced the institutionalization of OER as a digital public good supporting inclusive and equitable education.
- As reaffirmed by the 2022 Transforming Education Summit, countries must prioritize the development of inclusive, curriculum-aligned public digital learning platforms underpinned by OER to ensure content is accessible, free, and guaranteed as a public good aligned with the right to education.
- Mainstreaming OER into national education and training systems enhances institutional capacities, enables the localization and contextualization of learning content, and fosters inclusive, multilingual, and participatory knowledge co-creation aligned with sustainable development.
- Persistent gaps in inclusive digital education—including limited availability of high-quality, multilingual OER and insufficient teacher training—require increased investment, capacity development, and coordinated action to ensure equitable access to quality digital learning.
- The UNESCO Recommendation on OER calls upon Member States to implement open licensing policies and interoperable platforms that facilitate the adaptation, reuse, and sharing of educational content, with particular attention to accessibility for marginalized groups and persons with disabilities.
- Capacity development strategies anchored in OER and guided by principles of equity, co-creation, and sustainability are key to empowering teachers and learners and to building inclusive and resilient digital learning ecosystems.
- The WSIS+20 review should integrate the promotion of OER as digital public goods, the responsible use of emerging technologies in education, and the sustainability of digital learning ecosystems, as outlined in the Dubai Declaration on OER and aligned with the Global Digital Compact and the 2030 Agenda.
- Suggested insertion after Paragraph 81: Strengthening capacity development through the strategic use of Open Educational Resources (OER) and openly licensed content constitutes a key enabler for inclusive, equitable, and sustainable digital transformation.

IGF Dynamic Coalition Internet Standards, Security and Safety (IS3C) contribution to the WSIS + 20 Elements Paper

Excellencies,

On behalf of IGF DC-IS3C, I respond to your invitation in the elements paper to send in a proposal on how to augment cybersecurity and data privacy. IS3C works from the shared goal of making online activity and interaction more secure and safer by achieving more widespread and rapid deployment of existing security-related Internet standards and ICT best practices. Below you will find a suggestion that is applicable to both topics, and are at the core of IS3C's existence: procurement of ICTs, e.g. services, devices, applications, hard and software, secure by design.

Before presenting these, I would like to thank you again for being able to present IS3C's latest report, 'Socio-political and Technical Impacts of IoT and PQC Policies', to you in Lillestrøm. It goes without saying that IS3C fully endorses the contribution of the DCs, to which this contribution is an annex.

IS3C provides the following suggestions to paragraphs 55, 56, and 69 in the elements paper.

55. Capacity building at all levels is critical to enabling protection against cyber threats.

56. We invite proposals in this section on augmenting confidence and security in the use of ICTs in line with existing processes and platforms.

IS3C advocates that cybersecurity levels of countries as a whole and organisations more specifically would be raised considerably, the moment these organisations procure their ICTs secure by design. I.e. demanding that later generation, security-related internet standards and ICT best practices are an integral part of the ICTs procured by them.

This means a significant shift in approach. IS3C points to three instant major changes to the ICT market: 1) Cybersecurity by design becomes a driver and an economic incentive for the market; 2) The responsibility of cybersecurity is also laid with the manufacturers and designers of ICTs and; 3) Prevention of cyber incidents is brought to an equal level with the mitigation of incidents. As governments are major players on the market, they will have to lead and bring security by design closer for all others on the market by starting to demand it.

Capacity building programmes where cyber security is concerned, and not only in developing nations, need to have the component procuring ICTs secure by design built into them, so that officials involved understand the importance and see the unique option they have to secure their respective organisations. Only when organisations, with governments as driving forces, procure their ICTs, applications, services and devices, according to the

latest cybersecurity standards, will a market of cybersecure products that prevent incidents develop, where now it is seriously lacking.

With the advent of quantum computing on the horizon, “we” still have a unique opportunity to install post-quantum cryptography now and protect our connections and data before the advent of the first quantum computer. The world needs to come together to make first decisions towards this timely deployment, that does not leave anyone behind. The IGF is uniquely placed to bring all stakeholders together on an equal footing to discuss and find consensus on the way forward in the form of a policy advice roadmap, to be decided on and implemented outside of the IGF.

69. Proposals on data governance will be presented in the zero draft, taking into consideration the ongoing process working group on data governance for development established by CSTD that will report to the General Assembly in 2026.

The safety and security of individuals behind data, as well as the data of governments, banks, industry and industrial processes, is a major concern to many and a huge challenge. Even more so in the light of a post-quantum world. The comments made under paragraph 56 on the procurement of ICTs secure by design are applicable one-on-one under paragraph 69. Only by adhering to up-to-date ISO and ICT standards and ICT best practices will data be protected in a more secure and professional way. As you will most likely read the contributions per paragraph, I repeat our comments in paragraph 56 here.

IS3C advocates that cybersecurity levels of countries as a whole and organisations more specifically, would be raised immediately the moment these organisations procure their ICTs secure by design. I.e. demanding that later generations, security-related internet standards and ICT best practices are an integral part of the ICTs procured by them. Data will be protected far better because of the deployment of said standards and best practices.

This means a significant shift in approach. This would bring three major changes to the ICT marketplace: 1) Cybersecurity becomes an economic incentive for the market; 2) The responsibility of cybersecurity is also laid with the manufacturers and designers of ICTs, and 3) Prevention of cyber incidents is brought to an equal level with mitigation of incidents. As governments are major players on the market, they will have to lead and bring security by design closer for all others on the market.

Capacity building programmes where cyber security and data privacy are concerned, and not only in developing nations, need to have the component procuring ICTs secure by design built into them. Only when organisations, with governments as driving forces procure their ICTs, applications, services and devices, according to the latest cybersecurity standards, will a market of cybersecure products and data protection that prevent incidents develop, where now it is mostly lacking.

With the advent of quantum computing on the horizon, “we” still have a unique opportunity to install post-quantum cryptography now and protect our connections and data far better before the advent of the first quantum computer. The world needs to come together to make first decisions towards this timely deployment, that does not leave anyone behind. The IGF is uniquely placed to bring all stakeholders together on an equal footing to discuss and find consensus on the way forward, outside of the IGF. A major reason to decide favourably to continue the IGF.

Comment from DC Schools on Internet Governance on WSIS+20 Elements Paper

The Elements Paper rightly acknowledges capacity building as a foundational pillar of Internet governance, notably in Paragraphs 77–81. Beyond this, the term “capacity building" appears nearly 80 times throughout the document—underscoring its central importance. The Internet Governance Forum (IGF) itself serves as a unique global platform for capacity development, a role significantly advanced by the Dynamic Coalitions (DCs).

DCs function as engines of capacity development within the IGF ecosystem, facilitating both the accumulation and dissemination of knowledge. They also play a role in leadership development and partnership building and contribute substantially to increasing the participation of developing country stakeholders in global Internet governance processes. In particular they have contributed to increasing the number of women who play leadership roles in IG at national, regional and global levels. Many DCs, including the DC on Schools of Internet Governance, operate through multistakeholder collaboration on timely policy issues. Our coalition, in particular, focuses on supporting and strengthening Internet Governance Schools across all regions, thereby enhancing meaningful participation in Internet governance processes globally.

While we welcome the recognition of capacity building in the Elements Paper, we emphasize the urgent need for sustainable financial support. Without concrete funding mechanisms, the potential of DCs to deliver impactful and inclusive capacity building will remain constrained. To meet both current and future demands, the IGF community must commit to resourcing these vital efforts in a structured and sustained manner.

Building on the Elements Paper's emphasis on inclusive capacity development, we reaffirm the longstanding contribution of youth-led and community-driven initiatives within the IGF ecosystem. Experience in regional Schools of Internet Governance and policy workshops shows that diverse voices enrich every stage of multistakeholder dialogue. We therefore welcome the Paper's recognition of collaboration across regions and generations, and stand ready to keep sharing lessons learned through ongoing IGF processes.

Dynamic Coalition on the Sustainability of Journalism and News Media (DC-Journalism)

Input for the WSIS+20 Elements Paper - 17 July 2025

Independent journalism and public interest media are essential to a people-centered, inclusive, and development-oriented information society, as well as to **ensuring access to relevant, timely, local, multilingual, and fact-based information,** as recognised by Principle 55 in the Geneva Declaration and reaffirmed by commitments 35(b) and (c) in the Global Digital Compact. To that end, **strengthening the independence and sustainability of journalism and public interest media** must be a key priority in order to preserve their vital role in the digital information ecosystem.

To future-proof digital governance frameworks, the outcomes of the WSIS+20 Review should reaffirm the WSIS+10 Resolution and—through a multistakeholder approach that includes the active and meaningful participation of Dynamic Coalitions—ensure stronger integration of media considerations across relevant Action Lines, including those on infrastructure, digital economy, AI, and content governance.

The recognition in the WSIS+20 Elements Paper of the importance of human rights and inclusive digital transformation is welcomed. Building on the existing outline of the Elements Paper, we recommend that the Zero Draft and the WSIS+20 Outcome document incorporate and acknowledge the following points:

- **(Paragraph 48**) Any limitation on freedom of expression must meet the following criteria: legality, necessity, proportionality to the legitimate aim pursued, and should be in line with international human rights law.
- **(Paragraph 50)** References to journalism and media should include the words “independent” before journalism, and “public interest” before media: “*…strengthen **independent** journalism and public **interest** media…*”. Further text developments should include the promotion of “**freedom of expression and plurality of information.”**[1]
- **(Paragraph 47) Include a reference to** the **role of public interest media and independent journalism in upholding democratic processes, civic engagement and countering systemic risks posed by platform design and generative AI[2].** Noting that, while journalists and media actors increasingly rely on social media platforms to disseminate public interest content, the business models and design features of these platforms continue to prioritize engagement over safety and integrity. Ensuring platform accountability, grounded in a human rights–based approach, is necessary to mitigate these systemic risks and restore public trust in the media.
- **(Paragraph 45**) Specific mention to the online threats faced by women journalists and other vulnerable groups, and how such digital violence, abuse and harassment violates the right to freedom of expression of women journalists, other media workers, and human rights defenders.

We also take this opportunity to underscore that, **to promote a resilient and inclusive information society**, media and digital literacy, and targeted capacity building should be **matched with holistic support to the media ecosystem**, addressing the range of issues that independent and public interest media organisations face. These efforts must **include online safeguards, sustained funding and effective rights respecting mechanisms to mitigate online harms** by the social media platforms, generative AI tools and other emerging technologies. Without such measures, the **production and availability of reliable, independent, and fact-based information online will continue to decline**.

In conclusion, as reflected in the analysis and contributions of the DC-Journalism community, the sustainability of independent journalism and public interest media needs to be ensured and recognised as a **precondition for an inclusive, rights-based, and development-oriented digital transformation.**

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[1] in alignment with WSIS+10 Resolution, para.44

[2] in line with UN Secretary-General’s Global Principles for Information Integrity and UNESCO Guidelines on Platform Regulation.