

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

The last two decades have seen significant efforts by all stakeholders to implement WSIS Action Lines. This collaborative work resulted in tremendous growth and facilitated a remarkable ICT evolution, as a critical enabler for sustainable development. This has been possible thanks to all stakeholders being involved in making the changes happen. The multistakeholder approach, enshrined in the Tunis Agenda and reaffirmed in the WSIS+10 review outcomes, facilitated cooperation among governments, businesses, civil society, and the technical community, multiplying multistakeholder partnerships to implement the WSIS Action Lines, that has led to concrete benefits for end users in their daily lives.

The collaboration that occurs within the W3C community working on the development of open web standards, has powered many of the services and applications that have supported the progress and advancement of the action lines across and the different targets of the SDGs. We have also seen the growth in both technical understanding and capacity of governments to incentivize adoption of open standards as part of the national frameworks for digitalization, including strategies and policies.

Collaboration has also facilitated progress around common understanding and implementation of best practices and principles related to privacy and security in a more consistent manner. It has also powered many efforts around internationalization so that more languages render correctly in digital devices, as well as efforts around accessibility, that facilitate people living with a disability to engage effectively online.

For two decades, the Internet Governance Forum (IGF), an outcome of WSIS, has successfully served as the world's primary multistakeholder platform for dialogue on Internet governance issues, providing input for consensus building. We believe that the Zero Draft should explicitly acknowledge the IGF role in achieving significant progress in the implementation of the WSIS outcomes.

We would like to highlight mentions in the Elements Paper about the relevance of standardization and the role of the technical community. We believe the Zero Draft should expand on those references already included in the following paragraphs, and what support mechanisms may facilitate the engagement of organizations that are working to advance this work, such as W3C:

(Para 3 and 5) recognizes the technical community as a distinct stakeholder that has played an indispensable role of stakeholder collaboration in achieving WSIS outcomes. We believe technical community input and advice should be proactively sought after, at different stages during policy development and implementation. Such processes should recognize the need for input from all relevant technical community organizations that are involved in shaping different layers of the technologies considered when pursuing the achievement of the WSIS outcomes, not only a few.

(Para 27) recognizes the importance of setting up sustainability standards for digital technologies, including the W3C Sustainable Web Guidelines.

(Para 43-50) address human rights and ethical considerations. However, most of these statements included are focusing on applying ethical frameworks after solutions have reached users or during the solution development process. We encourage the Zero Draft to expand on the value of standardization and the reflections and discussions that power the consensus that takes place in technical community organizations, and recognize the value of principles-led technical developments, such as those enabled by the W3C Ethical Web Principles.

(Para 68) recognizes the importance of standards and their intrinsic relationship with interoperability as well as their relevance for economies across the global majority. The work of W3C and other standardization organizations is key to promoting innovation and inclusion.

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? *

Despite the considerable successes in implementing the WSIS outcomes, one-third of the world's population still lacks access and that broadens inequalities. New challenges are impacting the open and global nature of the Internet.

We recommend that the relevant sections of the Zero Draft (Bridging Digital Divides, Enabling Environment, Capacity Building) focus on the purpose behind societies need to connect, learn and share. To this end, The Zero Draft should focus on continuing to build security and confidence in the use of ICTs and preserving the open and global nature of the Internet as follows:

- Facilitate access to funding vehicles that support engagement in the development of open standards to power locally-relevant digital innovation at scale.
 - Incentivize active participation in open standards development from stakeholders from the global majority.
 - Incentivize adoption of open standards that support interoperability, are privacy preserving and incorporate security by design.
 - Ensure that content and services are available in people's languages, and that persons with disabilities can access information, participate equally, and enjoy the same services as those without disabilities.
 - Recognize the vital role of technical capacity-building plays in every aspect of technology development, adoption and use.
 - Recognize the essential role that clear definitions of a technical stack based on open standards play in enabling a policy and regulatory environment that nurtures a healthy ecosystem, fosters competition and provides users with agency and choice.
- We strongly recommend that the Zero Draft recognize the crucial role of capacity building and collaborative multistakeholder approaches and emphasize the need for:
- Supporting the development of access to state-of-the-art training and provide the necessary funding to maintain training resources updated, relevant and in local languages.
 - Enhancing the digital skills of users, technical experts, and policymakers.
 - Adoption and implementation, where applicable, of the Ethical Web Principles to guide the development of the technologies that power the web, and consider how ethical principles frameworks can apply to ICTs
 - Continuous development and support for adoption of the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) across all government, financial, health and educational services.
 - Adoption of best practices and guidelines to make digital services more sustainable.
 - Investment in secure and privacy-preserving technologies that support information integrity.

Lastly, preserving the open and global nature of the Internet and the multistakeholder model of its governance is crucial for the implementation of the WSIS outcomes. We strongly suggest that the Zero Draft build on existing frameworks that acknowledge the openness of the Internet and its multistakeholder governance, like Para 26-27 of the Global Digital Compact (GDC). Based on the commitments of WSIS and GDC, we urge the Zero Draft to:

- Recognize the openness of the Internet and commit to preserving and enhancing it.
- Reaffirm the commitment to the multistakeholder model of Internet governance, and pledge to ensure inclusive and meaningful participation from all stakeholders, in particular technical community organizations and the array of standards development organizations that support different layers of the technology that we all use and enjoy.

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? *

Keeping the web open is one of the key elements to achieve the main goal of WSIS: to build a people-centered, inclusive, and development-oriented Information Society. While looking at emerging digital trends and technologies is important, the WSIS process should focus on people and how they can reap the benefits of what technology has to offer. Support for people-centric open standards development, built by consensus, in a multistakeholder environment is key to building confidence and security in the use of ICTs. Our desire to explore and experiment with new and emerging technologies should be balanced by an ethical approach. We firmly believe that the topics related to emerging trends and technologies, such as Artificial Intelligence, should stay within the current relevant WSIS Action Lines, especially those related to information access and integrity, sustainable development, capacity building, and cultural and linguistic diversity, as well as the underlying connectivity required.

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

The Elements paper should have reflected on all the WSIS Action Lines in more detail, and our recommendation will be for the Zero Draft document to provide a more comprehensive reflection, as well as to expand on the mechanisms advancing the Sustainable Development Goals.

We are also surprised by the lack of mention of cultural and linguistic diversity in the Elements Paper. While multilingualism is acknowledged in the context of Internet content, any references of cultural diversity (Action Line C8) are notably missing. This omission is particularly concerning given the widening digital divides and the rapid development and deployment of AI technologies. We recommend that proper consideration is given to cultural diversity as a core component of the WSIS's vision to build a people-centred, inclusive, and development-oriented information society, in particular efforts related to internationalization, localization and language preservation.

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

Among the remaining topics, we would like to offer the following reflections:

The language on Internet governance should be updated in the Zero Draft to accurately reflect the agreements made in the WSIS+10 Outcome Document and the GDC, both recognizing the multistakeholder nature of Internet governance and the importance of the technical community as a stakeholder. We recommend reaffirming Para 57-59 of the WSIS+10 Outcome document as well as committing to the Guidelines in the NETmundial+10 Outcome Document to enable stakeholders to engage more meaningfully in Internet governance processes. The Zero draft should also capture a clear commitment to promoting greater participation in the Internet governance discussions by Governments, the private sector, civil society, international organizations, the technical and academic communities, and all other relevant stakeholders, nationally and regionally. In particular, more visible efforts to bring in the contributions of open standards development organizations that are tackling different layers of the technology stack, in particular those developing standards for end user application and services, that have a very concrete and direct impact in people's lives and are a key part of the WSIS main goal.

Regarding the renewal of the IGF mandate, we ask the UN Secretary General to extend the existing mandate of the Internet Governance Forum, as set out in paragraphs 72 to 78 of the Tunis Agenda, indefinitely, with sustainable funding that support meaningful participation across all stakeholders and that convenes timely and relevant discussions that contribute to consensus building. We also

We believe the focus on security should be anchored in a collaborative approach which has been fundamental in building confidence in the use of ICTs.

Multistakeholder cross-border collaboration is essential. We recommend the Zero Draft to focus on this component rather than the processes outside of the WSIS mandate.

At the risk of not providing adequate consideration to the existing sections of the document, we believe that it will be more productive to include a specific technology like AI in the existing WSIS framework, to make sure that adequate reflection across all sections is documented. For example, we believe that the WSIS+20 should emphasize the importance of open standards and interoperability as essential building blocks for Artificial Intelligence.

Furthermore, the current focus of this theme is solely multilateral, despite the relevant existing frameworks, such as the GDC (Para 50), recognizing the need for the meaningful participation of all stakeholders in AI governance, including the technical community.

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

The current WSIS Action Lines are technology-neutral and have accommodated the technological developments that have occurred to date. The development of the WSIS framework should be supported by addressing new and emerging issues through better implementation of the Action Lines and collaboration between various stakeholders.

In this regard, we would like to highlight the importance of the Internet Governance Forum, which has become an indispensable element for the implementation of the WSIS outcomes. The IGF is a unique platform for various stakeholders to exchange experiences and practices and inform various efforts in their local communities. This platform has proven its ability to evolve, build mechanisms for intersessional work, and incorporate discussions related to new challenges.

We call for the Zero Draft to recognize this unique role, confirm the IGF mandate, and make it permanent.

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

The Elements Paper does not explain why specific issues are included or excluded from the thematic sections. As highlighted in our response to Question 4, it is especially notable that ICTs for inclusion and cultural diversity are omitted. This lack of clarity and transparency about how specific issues were chosen makes it difficult to see how the feedback from the consultation will impact the development of the Zero Draft of the outcome document.

We agree with other stakeholders that it is premature to include any language that would lead to adding new or opening existing WSIS Action Lines. In any event, the Zero Draft of the outcome document should explicitly state whether the intent is to strengthen the existing Action Lines through their implementation by reflecting on new issues and challenges or to create new Action Lines.

We strongly urge the Zero Draft to follow the approach taken in Para. 1-3 of the WSIS+10 Outcome Document and reaffirm the commitments to the WSIS vision, the Geneva Declaration of Principles, the Geneva Plan of Action and its Action Lines, the Tunis Commitment and the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society, and the values and principles of multistakeholder cooperation and engagement.

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

Sylvia Cadena

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

Please enter an email