

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

The WSIS process has made significant strides in global digital inclusion. Key achievements include the establishment of the WSIS Action Lines, the Internet Governance Forum (IGF), and the promotion of multi-stakeholder cooperation for ICT4D. These platforms have empowered civil society, governments, and the private sector to jointly shape digital policies, close the digital divide, and mainstream ICTs in development agendas.

WSIS has also influenced policy frameworks such as the SDGs, particularly Goal 9c on universal internet access. The expansion of broadband infrastructure, mobile connectivity, and digital literacy initiatives, especially in developing countries, has helped bring millions online.

Notably, WSIS has catalyzed youth participation in the digital transformation process, supported gender-sensitive ICT policies, and encouraged the use of ICTs for education, health, and disaster response. The increased visibility and support for innovation hubs and ICT-based entrepreneurship in Africa and other regions is also commendable.

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 progress, several challenges remain. The digital divide continues to persist, particularly in rural and underserved regions. Access to reliable internet, affordable devices, and digital skills remains uneven, exacerbating inequalities.

Cybersecurity, data protection, and online misinformation are growing threats. Many governments and communities lack the capacity to respond effectively to digital risks. Additionally, there's limited coordination between WSIS processes and national digital strategies, especially in fragile and conflict-affected states.

Youth, women, persons with disabilities, and indigenous communities are still underrepresented in decision-making processes. The lack of inclusive governance models hampers the achievement of WSIS goals.

Moreover, funding gaps and weak implementation mechanisms for WSIS Action Lines at the national level impede sustainable progress. Climate change and digital sustainability have not been adequately integrated into the digital transformation discourse.

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? *

1. Universal digital access: Prioritize infrastructure development in underserved areas, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, using public-private partnerships and affordable connectivity models.

2. Digital literacy and capacity building: Equip youth and marginalized communities with the skills needed for meaningful participation in the digital economy.

3. Inclusive governance: Ensure meaningful representation of civil society, youth-led organizations, women, and indigenous groups in digital policy-making.

4. Human rights and data ethics: Promote policies that protect privacy, combat digital surveillance, and uphold human rights online.

5. Youth-led innovation: Support digital entrepreneurship, innovation hubs, and green tech solutions aligned with Agenda 2030 and Africa Agenda 2063.

6. Digital climate resilience: Integrate climate action into digital transformation strategies.

7. Strengthened multistakeholder collaboration: Enhance coordination among IGF, WSIS Forum, and UNGIS, and ensure their outputs inform national and regional ICT strategies.

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

Digital Peace and Security: Address digital conflict, online radicalization, and disinformation campaigns affecting fragile states.

Digital and Ecological Sustainability: Explore the environmental footprint of digital technologies and promote green ICT solutions.

AI Governance and Ethics: Introduce frameworks for inclusive, rights-based AI development and deployment.

Intergenerational Digital Justice: Recognize the digital aspirations of future generations, especially in rapidly digitizing societies.

Inclusive Digital Economies: Promote policies that support youth entrepreneurship and local digital industries.

Digital Health and Crisis Preparedness: Strengthen e-health systems and digital tools for humanitarian response

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

Yes. It is important that the Elements Paper gives due attention to:

Local ownership and indigenous knowledge systems in digital governance.

Youth and women leadership in digital innovation and advocacy.

Sub-Sahara cooperation for knowledge sharing and technology transfer. Additionally, paragraphs referencing infrastructure investment and digital literacy should include intercultural, multilingual access and gender-sensitive design

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

Localized Implementation Plans: Align Action Lines with national development strategies, with measurable targets and inclusive monitoring

Youth-Centered Tracks: Introduce a Youth Digital Leadership Program across IGF, WSIS Forum, and UNGIS

Capacity Support: Provide technical and financial support to grassroots organizations in developing countries to contribute effectively

Cross-sector Dialogues: Facilitate stronger linkages between tech companies, policy makers, academia, and civil society

Digital Impact Reporting: Establish annual WSIS impact reviews at the country and regional levels, focusing on equity, inclusion, and SDG alignment

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

The WSIS+20 review must go beyond assessing progress—it must reimagine the digital future through the lenses of justice, peace, sustainability, and youth empowerment. We encourage the UNGA to elevate the voices of grassroots actors, including youth-led organizations, in shaping the next digital development agenda.

Our organization, YIL-Network, remains committed to this mission and stands ready to collaborate in co-designing inclusive, climate-resilient, and equitable digital societies.

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

Name: Francis Masaline Country: Liberia Organization: Youth International Leadership Institute (YIL-Network) Stakeholder Type: Civil Society / Youth-led NGO

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

Please enter an email