

## **Written Input to UN WSIS+20 Review Zero Draft Asia Pacific Network Information Centre (APNIC)**

APNIC welcomes the WSIS+20 review Zero Draft published by the UN WSIS+20 Co-Facilitators and appreciates the opportunity to provide input to the WSIS+20 Review process.

Building on its previous contributions to the WSIS+20 review process, APNIC reaffirms its commitment to supporting the WSIS vision through responsible stewardship of Internet number resources, technical capacity development, and active engagement in multistakeholder governance. We strongly support the reinforcement of global multistakeholder cooperation, permanency of the IGF including the national and regional IGFs, and a continued emphasis on bridging digital divides and building capacity.

### **Internet governance**

APNIC appreciates the efforts in the Zero Draft to recognize the global multistakeholder community of Internet governance comprising all stakeholders – governments, international organisations, the private sector, civil society, the technical community and academia. We agree that all stakeholders must, in their respective roles and responsibilities, “cooperate in order to achieve the vision of a people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented Information Society”. We support calls to enhance cooperation that involve all stakeholders as effective Internet governance can only be achieved when all stakeholders work collectively to preserve the open, free, global, interoperable, stable, and secure nature of the Internet.

Further, APNIC strongly supports the IGF’s permanent mandate as an outcome of the WSIS+20 review process. The IGF is the central platform for multistakeholder dialogue and collaboration on issues related to Internet governance. The value of the IGF lies in its multistakeholder structure and ability to table matters related to the Internet and its use for discussion through a bottom-up, multistakeholder, open, and transparent manner.

We fully support the work of the National and Regional Initiatives (NRIs), as an invaluable extension of the global IGF, which have propagated multistakeholder discussion on Internet policy issues that have arisen at the national, sub-regional, and regional levels.

A well-resourced Secretariat is needed to support the proper functioning and activities of the IGF. As one of the major financial contributors to the IGF, we support the call for additional funding and resourcing to support the work of the IGF and its Secretariat.

### **Bridging the digital divide**

APNIC recommends that the WSIS+20 outcome document includes encouragement and promotion of IPv6 deployment to support future expansion of the Internet and its

use. The Zero Draft acknowledges that while Internet infrastructure and connectivity are improving, gaps remain in affordability, digital literacy, and access to new technologies.

Large-scale deployment of IPv6 remains key to bridging these gaps. With IPv4 addresses exhausted, IPv6 provides the addressing space needed to connect billions of new users and devices, especially in fast-growing economies. Without IPv6, the risk is that communities in developing regions face overall higher costs, limited connectivity, and barriers to innovation.

Ensuring widespread IPv6 deployment is therefore essential to affordable, sustainable, and inclusive growth. In the Asia Pacific region, China and Vietnam are key players at the forefront of driving nation-wide IPv6 deployment through national development plans.

Bridging the digital divide requires not only expanded connectivity but also sustainable, community-driven approaches to infrastructure. Community-driven infrastructure models empower local operators and residents to design, deploy, and maintain networks that respond to their specific geographic and economic realities. These include in rural, remote, or island environments where commercial investment may be limited.

There are numerous real-world examples of community networks in the Asia Pacific region that combine rural connectivity with social enterprise and innovation. Community network projects such as Net2Home Thailand have provided affordable Internet connectivity to rural homes in Thailand since 2013. In Bangladesh, communities of women artisans were provided Internet access and taught to leverage the online environment to sell their crafts, thereby uplifting these communities from below the poverty line.

We also recommend including in the WSIS+20 outcome document recognition of the vital role that Internet Exchange Points (IXPs) play in making the Internet more accessible, affordable, and resilient. By keeping network traffic local and leveraging peering arrangements, IXPs reduce Internet transit costs, improve network performance and are crucial to increasing Internet resilience.

## **Capacity development**

APNIC recommends that the section on “Capacity development” be strengthened to include technical capacity development. Internet technical capacity building is foundational to ensuring that communities can not only connect to the Internet but also operate, secure, and sustain their digital environments. It involves equipping network operators and organizations with the skills, tools, and knowledge required to manage Internet infrastructure and services effectively.

Capacity building goes beyond promoting digital skills and digital literacy that are a focus of the Zero Draft. A big part of capacity building is also building communities. In this regard, technical capacity building extends beyond training courses. APNIC’s work

is part of a broader ecosystem of capacity development led by Internet organizations and local network operator communities. APNIC fosters regional and national Network Operator Groups (NOGs), supports fellowships and mentoring programs, and encourages peer-to-peer knowledge sharing. These communities of practice ensure that skills are retained locally and scaled across generations of network professionals.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, the WSIS+20 review outcomes should reaffirm the open, global, interoperable, stable, and secure Internet that enables inclusive and sustainable digital development. APNIC recommends that the priorities of the WSIS+20 review are: reinforcement of global multistakeholder cooperation; the permanency and proper resourcing of the IGF; concrete measures to bridge digital divides through IPv6 deployment, community-driven infrastructure, and Internet Exchange Points; and strengthened recognition of technical capacity development.