Outcome Summary of Webinar 2 "Reflection on WSIS+20 Zero Draft"

Preamble

This outcome summary was developed through a brainstorming exercise held during a Webinar organised by the Asia Pacific Regional Internet Governance Forum (APrIGF) WSIS+20 Working Group on Wednesday, 17 September 2025 at 5:00-6:30 UTC, attended by 36 participants. The webinar was conducted following an open process, with invitations shared via the APrIGF Community mailing lists. The outcome summary presented in this document reflects the collective inputs and perspectives shared by participants from the broader APrIGF Community during the webinar discussions, and should not be interpreted as representing a single view from a specific group or member in the Multi-stakeholder Steering Group (MSG) and the Working Group.

The webinar followed a workshop-style format, designed for active participation. Through this webinar, participants were able to:

- Share perspectives on whether the Zero Draft addresses the challenges of the Asia Pacific (APAC) region
- Examine if the key concerns and realities of the APAC region are adequately represented
- Contribute directly in shaping the WSIS+20 dialogue from the APAC region

All participants were organised into break-out groups to discuss one of the following five main sections within the Zero Draft, selected by the APrIGF WSIS+20 Working Group. The five sections are:
- Multistakeholder Model of Internet Governance
- Digital Access, Inclusion & Connectivity
- Human Rights
- Building Confidence and Security in ICTs
- Digital Economy

Webinar participants discussed 3 guiding questions in the breakout group they were assigned to as guided by facilitators (based on the topics they had selected in the registration form):
- What is missing and where are the gaps in the Zero Draft?
- What do we want to keep and reiterate/expand upon?
- What do we like to see that is currently captured in the Zero Draft?

1. Multistakeholder Model in Internet Governance

01. The Zero Draft acknowledges the role of the different stakeholder groups that should be participating in a multi-stakeholder model. This reaffirmation of the multi-stakeholder model must be retained, while reaffirming the need to keep the IGF as a Permanent Forum, as well as to maintain the reaffirmation of the Tunis Agenda.

02. Clarity around the importance of including all the stakeholders and the technical community will help towards addressing emerging information society challenges, including enabling a secure and sustained Internet, irrespective of geopolitical tensions, and issues like effortless access for vulnerable populations, including women, indigenous communities, and persons with disabilities.

03. While reaffirming multi-stakeholder governance, the Zero Draft can also address gaps in power asymmetry or propose a mechanism to elevate global majority voices in multi-stakeholder discussions on issues like Internet / digital rights enforcement

04. The capacity building aspect of multi-stakeholder engagements can be prioritised, especially from representations from the South and underrepresented groups and economies.

05. It is not clear as to how the multi-stakeholder engagement model can navigate in funding for wider engagements meaningfully, to maintain the permanent mandate of the IGF, with more participation from the Global South and underrepresented societies and economies.

06. One suggested area is to encourage funding for NRIs. Local UN offices could help with encouraging information sharing and participation in the IGF and the WSIS process.

07. With regard to funding sources, the meeting noted the decreasing presence and participation from the private and corporate entities. The private sector's presence and contribution should be acknowledged in multi-stakeholderism processes. The private sector plays a significant role in bridging the funding gaps.

08. Additionally, the Zero Draft may require more clarity on what enhanced cooperation actually means, and how it should reflect in practice.

09. Further, we recommend encouraging local district, municipal, and provincial level representations in the Internet Governance processes. This will help Internet Governance processes connect closer to the local governance and communities.

2. Digital Access, Inclusion & Connectivity

01. While the Zero Draft has highlighted that despite substantial growth in the access infrastructure, there are still divides within the regions, economies, communities, and more acutely in the developing/least-developed economies and regions.

02. There are emerging digital access and inclusion challenges, such as geopolitical tensions, climate change, natural calamities and disasters, and conflicts that impact digital infrastructure, safety, and security, and access due to shutdowns/internet disconnectedness. These should be recognised and considered. The divides within economies should be given further emphasis.

03. While the Zero Draft highlights the gender access gaps, the socio-cultural circumstances/challenges that still hinder access for women and girls, and sexual minorities, should be acknowledged.

04. While the Zero Draft calls for concerted action by all stakeholders to promote accessibility and equal access to the Internet and digital resources as a priority, this needs more clarity on what concerted action would signify and what.

05. Affordability continues to limit digital equality with the costs of devices and connectivity affecting groups and communities, including migrants, refugees, and minorities, in need of higher, better devices and high-speed connectivity.

06. Financing digital access and inclusion continues to be a major challenge. While resources can be a challenge, monitoring, checks, and effective implementation of existing financing mechanisms are crucial.

07. The Zero Draft highlights the relevance and importance of the multilingual Internet and local content in the local language.

08. Though there has been good progress in platforms and services wherein local language has been incorporated, there needs to be more concerted efforts to address this culturally specific digital barrier. In this context, the issues around financing, technology transfer and development, and capacity building should be prioritised.

09. The need for more multilingual Internet platforms, domain names, content, services and diverse formats of content and delivery to ensure digital diversity and participation for all should be reiterated in the Zero Draft, including how emerging technology such as AI could address digital access and inclusion.

3. Human Rights

01. We agreed that it was important and good to have a dedicated section on Human Rights. The Zero Draft recognised that human rights are central to the Internet and to the idea of a free, fair, open, and inclusive Internet.

02. It is recommended to move some of the initial paragraphs focusing on past commitments in the Human Rights section to the preamble instead.

03. Overall, the Zero Draft lacks action-oriented solutions to mitigate online harms. Issues related to restrictions on freedom of expression, right to privacy, and digital harms could be further expanded on.

04. There may also be new digital rights such as right to work, and access to the Internet as a basic human right, which could be included and addressed.

05. The section on women rights should be mainstreamed across the document and expanded on. There needs to be reaffirmation of the struggles and challenges that women face when using the Internet, particularly in terms of digital harms such as gender-based violence and hate speech.

4. Building Confidence and Security in ICTs

01. While the Zero Draft highlights building confidence and security in the use of information, communication technologies, it should prioritise the challenge of ensuring a positive digital landscape and environment in alignment with human rights principles, with a focus on the positive experiences and well-being derived from the intentional and mindful use of digital technology as well as prosperity and improvement of human conditions as the key.

02. The Zero Draft's commitment to protecting privacy and freedom of expression while addressing digital harm presents a key challenge, as well as the need to balance these often competing values.

03. While the Zero Draft commends the efforts to build confidence and security in the use of digital technologies, improving and maintaining a high level of public and community trust in digital technologies and ICTs will determine the outcome and impact of the efforts.

04. Resilience and response to cyber attacks must remain a focus to ensure optimal safety for Internet users and to improve trust in digital technologies and ICTs. All partners should be involved in such collaboration..

05. The Zero Draft's commitment to addressing violence and harmful content online is commendable, but it has significant gaps in its approach. It identifies a broad range of harms—from hate speech to cyberbullying—but it lacks a clear, universally agreed-upon definition for many of these terms, which is critical for effective policy. Most importantly, while it promises to establish "robust risk mitigation and redress measures," we note that it does not provide any specific examples or a framework for what these measures should look like. This leaves a crucial gap in how these noble intentions will be translated into concrete action.

06. Additionally, the Zero Draft's commitment to protecting privacy and freedom of expression while addressing these harms is a key challenge, and the document is missing a detailed explanation of how these often-competing values will be balanced.

5. Digital Economy

01. While the Zero Draft puts a strong emphasis on building and strengthening digital economies, including making sure the least developed and developing economies and societies are actually able to participate well, there could be greater clarity on how to drive the digital economies forward, in terms of technology, infrastructure, capacities, and other core areas.

02. It would be useful to have more clarity on how to address concentrations of technological capacity and market power to ensure "equitable and meaningful inclusion in the digital economy and the benefits of digital cooperation are fairly distributed and do not accelerate existing inequality or impede the full achievement of Sustainable Development".

03. While the Zero Draft recognises that financial services have evolved rapidly, and Internet banking and mobile money systems have changed the way in which businesses and customers interact, it can address related concerns like quality of connectivity, Digital Public Infrastructures, capacities, digital safety security issues, and participation of disability and other vulnerable groups, especially in developing economies that risk digital financial inclusion efforts.

04. Regarding interoperability between financial or digital transaction systems, while this could be key to expand services with inclusion, the Zero Draft can note concerns around concentration of technology capacity and market power capturing local markets, which reduces the role of the smaller players and their survival in the digital economy.