

Progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to WSIS outcomes at the regional and international levels

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The Association for Progressive Communications (APC)

A global network of Civil Society organisations - members in 70+ countries



APC supports development of policies and and innovative strategies that help ensure more equitable use of the Internet. E.g addressing hate speech online while supporting freedom of expression, using innovative technologies and business models to increase meaningful connectivity - especially in rural unconnected areas

Contexts and tensions that affect action toward WSIS goals

- Achievement of the SDGs- digital's growing importance, but growing social and information infrastructure inequalities limit universal progress
- Addressing the climate crisis - digital's negative and positive impact
- Growing global economic uncertainty and pandemics - more poverty, more migration, more opportunities for remote work and digital wealth creation
- Geopolitical uncertainty and strife - regional and national polarization - more information, more misinformation/disinformation

Key Threats and Challenges

- State Surveillance - e.g Pegasus
- Corporate surveillance, and advertising supported infrastructure
- Censorship and Internet Shutdowns inhibiting free flow of information
- Global silicon chip supply chain issues plus US/China/Russia conflict impacts

Key Opportunities to Contribute to the SDGs (1)

- **Renewable energy** - now a key action everywhere, not only for rural areas
 - Needs: financing/prepay, subsidies & feed-in tariffs for solar, hydro, biogas, capacity building
- **Recycle and repair** - the circular economy and addressing e-waste
 - Needs: Capacity building, policy, venues (incl mobile and fixed maker spaces) e.g restart.org, africamakerspace.net
- **Internet of Things** - aid to environmental degradation monitoring, agriculture
 - Needs: capacity building, standards, connectivity
- **Low Earth Orbit (LEO) and high power Geo satellites**- universal connectivity
 - Needs: policy change, small scale startup funding, capacity building
- **Decentralised/small scale connectivity** - fibre, gsm and wifi co-ops, social purpose operators, community radio stations, public access facilities
 - Needs: policy change, capacity building, startup funding, fibre backbones

Key Opportunities to Contribute to the SDGs (2)

- **AI and big data - valuable social information to guide evidence based policy making**
 - Needs: Open data & data governance policies, Open APIs to the big tech platforms
- **Decentralised web - new social media platforms, peer to peer networks**
 - Needs: clarity over where blockchain technologies have real added value
- **Virtual Reality - Metaverse, immersive interaction and learning tools**
 - Needs: better, cheaper technology, more investment, more research
- **Robotics & remote control - precision agriculture, extractive industry monitoring, telehealth and support for elderly**
 - Needs: clear policies, open source strategies, more research, more investment

Conclusion

Addressing these expanding range of opportunities and challenges that are presented to us today requires:

- **More robust frameworks for multi -stakeholder decision making and citizen oversight**
- **A spirit of collaboration between all parties, unified in addressing our common problems**

Thank you

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