GLOBAL
NETWORK
INITIATIVE

1. *Please share your suggestions for innovations that could be introduced in the structure and programme of the WSIS+20 Forum High-Level Event.*

In 2024, a myriad of processes and initiatives at the intersection of sustainable development and Internet governance will continue to come to a head and the work of defining and defending the importance of multistakeholder engagement in Internet governance will be critical. This patchwork of efforts can be overwhelming for the global internet community seeking to stay informed and meaningfully engage in the conversation. To this end, the Forum should provide space for updates to be provided on and opportunities to feed into the GDC and Summit of the Future, in addition to the key topics that will be the focus of the WSIS+20 process.

The WSIS Forum has significant multistakeholder convening power and this exercise has drawn significant attention from many relevant stakeholders. It should capitalize on that attention and its convening authority to design a deliberate, thoughtful, and inclusive program, to help streamline stakeholder engagement with these intersecting Internet governance processes. To this end, the WSIS+ 20 Forum should explore avenues to reinforce and build upon existing efforts to empower multistakeholder processes and support work toward a free, open, interoperable, and secure Internet, including those being undertaken through the Internet Governance Forum (IGF), the Christchurch Call, and the Freedom Online Coalition.

Finally, the WSIS+20 Forum High-Level event must explore ways to translate its discussions into tangible outcomes and commitments that can be pursued and implemented after the forum. These outcomes and commitments should be available to all stakeholders and participants, have broad consensus and buy-in, and where relevant, have the support and backing needed to ensure sustainability.

2. *The WSIS Forum is a UN global platform for multistakeholder implementation activities, information exchange, creation of knowledge, sharing of best practice, and to foster partnerships to advance development goals. Please suggest how the WSIS Forum can enhance its alignment with the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) , taking into account the outcomes of the UNGA Overall WSIS Review (A/RES/70/125).*

To align more closely with the implementation of the SDGs, it will be critical that the WSIS Forum facilitates multistakeholder engagement through its processes, structure, and outcomes. By fostering a collaborative environment and bringing together perspectives from across stakeholder groups, jurisdictions, and sectors, the WSIS can identify gaps, strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and risks that exist in achieving the SDGs. The Forum must also leverage the AI for Good Forum being organized by the ITU and organize a series of high-level and action-oriented conversations that bring together and feature key decision-makers.

Additionally, the Forum should consistently emphasize the importance of a multistakeholder and human rights-respecting approach to SDG implementation throughout its high-level messaging.

3. *Please provide your suggestions for key topics and themes that should be included in the High-Level Segment of the WSIS+20 Forum High-Level Event. These topics and themes should aim to maximize the impact and relevance of the Forum in light of current trends, while also considering the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Overall WSIS Review conducted by the United Nations General Assembly.*

Multistakeholder governance: exploring how multistakeholder governance of the internet and other technologies advances and can enhance human rights and further advance the SDGs.

4. *Please propose some ideas on format to make the High-Level segment more dynamic and interactive.*

To ensure equitable representation and participation among diverse stakeholders, the WSIS Forum should prioritize the inclusion of civil society, the technical community, and representatives from various jurisdictions, with particular focus on participants from the Global Majority. Furthermore, the Forum should curate interactive panels featuring fewer speakers to promote more engaging discussions and foster greater gender and geographic balance. Finally, the Forum should allocate adequate time for Q&A sessions to encourage meaningful interaction and feedback from participants.

5. *How can local, national and regional activities as well as innovative cross-sectoral partnerships for implementation, become more visible at the WSIS+20 Forum High-Level Event?*

To effectively engage stakeholders and leverage existing partnerships, the WSIS Forum should initiate outreach efforts before the event to surface potential collaborations that can be amplified through parallel workshops. Additionally, the Forum should actively engage with IGF Dynamic Coalitions and Policy Networks to involve their expertise and perspectives in the planning and execution of the Forum. This collaborative approach will ensure that the WSIS Forum builds upon existing work and fosters and supports partnerships to address critical internet governance issues.

6. *How can we ensure more equal participation in the parallel workshops at the WSIS+20 Forum High-Level Event?*

To foster a more inclusive and equitable WSIS Forum, it is crucial to prioritize Global Majority participation across all aspects of the event. This includes ensuring that individuals from the Global Majority, particularly, those part of civil society, are represented on panels, have their proposals considered for workshops, and receive support for travel and visa costs. This will require adequate planning and human resources given the Forum will be held in Geneva and obtaining a visa can be a significant barrier to participation from individuals based in the Global Majority. This includes communicating if workshops have been accepted and sharing the agenda far enough in advance for individuals to decide if they will be attending.

7. *What are the main achievements in the implementation of the WSIS Action Lines in the past 20 years?*

   C1. The role of governments and all stakeholders in the promotion of ICTs for development
   C2. Information and communication infrastructure
   C3. Access to information and knowledge
   C4. Capacity building
   C5. Building confidence and security in use of ICTs
   C6. Enabling environment
   C7. ICT applications: benefits in all aspects of life — E-government
   C7. ICT applications: benefits in all aspects of life — E-business
   C7. ICT applications: benefits in all aspects of life — E-learning
   C7. ICT applications: benefits in all aspects of life — E-health
   C7. ICT applications: benefits in all aspects of life — E-employment
   C7. ICT applications: benefits in all aspects of life — E-environment
   C7. ICT applications: benefits in all aspects of life — E-agriculture
   C7. ICT applications: benefits in all aspects of life — E-science
   C8. Cultural diversity and identity, linguistic diversity and local content
   C9. Media
   C10. Ethical dimensions of the Information Society
   C11. International and regional cooperation

8. *What are the key challenges in implementing the WSIS Action Lines and what areas that have not been adequately captured by the framework of the existing 11 WSIS Action Lines that would need to be addressed beyond 2025?*

   C1. The role of governments and all stakeholders in the promotion of ICTs for development

C2. Information and communication infrastructure
C3. Access to information and knowledge
C4. Capacity building
C5. Building confidence and security in use of ICTs
C6. Enabling environment
C7. ICT applications: benefits in all aspects of life — E-government
C7. ICT applications: benefits in all aspects of life — E-business
C7. ICT applications: benefits in all aspects of life — E-learning
C7. ICT applications: benefits in all aspects of life — E-health
C7. ICT applications: benefits in all aspects of life — E-employment
C7. ICT applications: benefits in all aspects of life — E-environment
C7. ICT applications: benefits in all aspects of life — E-agriculture
C7. ICT applications: benefits in all aspects of life — E-science
C8. Cultural diversity and identity, linguistic diversity and local content
C9. Media
C10. Ethical dimensions of the Information Society
C11. International and regional cooperation

9. *What are the key emerging issues and trends in the field of ICTs for development that should be taken into consideration for the WSIS+20 review?*

GNI would suggest the following issues/trends for consideration:

- Applying HRDD practices in the design, development, and use of AI and emerging technology.
- Data and infrastructure for AI development.
- Architecting rights respecting digital public infrastructure.
- Connectivity and digital inclusion
- Digital literacy
- Shrinking civic space
- Protection of human rights online during times of conflict

10. *Looking ahead to WSIS+20 and beyond, what is your vision for the future of the WSIS process and its role in shaping the global digital agenda?*

The WSIS process has been instrumental in forging the connection between digital technologies and development. This critical role must continue in the future. The WSIS Forum should transform into a mechanism where stakeholders come together to establish implementation principles and set actionable goals pertaining to digital technologies and sustainable

development. Stakeholders could leverage the Forum to advance their commitment to both the Internet and the SDGs.

To realize this vision, multistakeholder participation will be indispensable - both the private sector and civil society must be fully engaged to assist member states in achieving the SDGs and creating an enabling and inclusive digital environment. Any future process must ensure the inclusion of the Global South, specifically civil society organizations.

11. *Would you like to recommend a high-level speaker for the WSIS+20 Forum High-Level Event?*

    <mark>Yes</mark>. No

12. *Please provide the details of any speakers you would like to recommend.*

    David Kaye, former UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Opinion and Expression, and current Global Network Initiative (GNI) Board Chair

    Agustina Del Campo, Executive Director of the Center for Free Expression Studies at the University of Palermo (Argentina), and current GNI Vice Chair

    Jason Pielemeier, Executive Director, GNI

    Elonnai Hickok, Managing Director, GNI

13. *Would you like to request a thematic workshop during WSIS+20 Forum High-Level Event?*

    <mark>Yes.</mark> No.

14. *Please specify the topic of the workshop.*

    "Unpacking and Expanding Multistakeholderism in Practice"

    This workshop would seek to provide a comparative look at various multistakeholder lines of effort related to Internet/ICT governance. GNI's perspective is informed by over-a-decade-and-a-half of multistakeholder collaboration and offers valuable insights that can help guide all stakeholders in developing shared frameworks to help preserve a free, open, and secure Internet.

15. Would you like to request an exhibition space at the WSIS+20 Forum High-Level Event?

No

16. Please specify the theme of your stall.

N/A

17. Please specify any requirements for your stall.

N/A

18. Would you like to sponsor a coffee break or reception at the WSIS+20 Forum High-Level Event?

Yes. No.

19. WSIS Forum is extrabudgetary and every year we raise funds to defray the operational costs through partnerships. Would you be interested in sponsoring and being the digital transformation partner of the WSIS+20 Forum High-Level Event?

Yes. No.

20. Please suggest visible partnerships that might strengthen the implementation of WSIS 2025 and beyond.