IGF 2024

Concept Note: IGF 0 Day Event

Fit for Future: A Visioning Exercise for Digital Cooperation

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Date: December 15, 2024
Time: 10:45 AM - 12:45 PM Riyadh time (UTC +3:00)
Format: Hybrid Roundtable
Location: Workshop Room 5, King Abdulaziz International Conference Center (KAICC)/ Online

Organisers: Global Digital Justice Forum, Dynamic Coalition on Internet Rights and Principles, Digital Constitutionalism Network, Dynamic Coalition on Platform Responsibility)

Twenty years after the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), the project of building an inclusive, people-centred and development-oriented digital economy and society continues to present challenges. Even as divides in connectivity and access to ICTs have not been bridged, newer divides in data and AI infrastructural capabilities have emerged among and within countries, entrenching inequitable geographies of development and neo- colonial extractivism. The wealth of networks has been usurped by transnational platform firms who monopolise the foundational socio-economic infrastructures that underpin all domains of life, resulting in a simultaneous erosion of political and economic democracy. Last but not the least, the unsustainable ecological footprint of the ongoing digital transition poses new dilemmas for sustainable development in the context of the global climate crisis.

Status-quoist global digital cooperation arrangements have proved inadequate to this challenge. There are gaping governance deficits with respect to addressing state and corporate accountability for the protection and promotion of human rights in the digital context; leveraging cross-border data flows for development justice; and addressing the societal risks and harms of the rapidly advancing arc of AI innovation.

In a multilateral environment where there are widening trust deficits, the adoption of the Global Digital Compact in September 2024 is one step towards a principles-based global digital cooperation framework that can advance “an inclusive, open, sustainable, fair, safe and secure digital future for all”. At the same time, the potential of this new framework can materialise only through full synergy between the Implementation Map of the Global Digital Compact and WSIS mechanisms, particularly focusing on a re-invigoration of the WSIS Action Lines from a digital justice standpoint.

Global civil society (CS) has a critical role to play in advancing the strategic conversation on connecting the dots between WSIS+20 and GDC implementation.

At this zero-day event, we intend to create the space for this much-needed civil society reflection that will facilitate the construction of a forward-looking digital justice agenda that informs strategic action vis-a-vis the WSIS+20 review and GDC implementation. Building on a set of initial catalyst presentations from a multistakeholder panel of digital rights organisations, technical community members, and WSIS Action Line holders, we will dive into a strategic stocktaking exercise moderated by the organisers (with on-site and on-line participation).

Session flow below.

10.45-11.20 AM	**Round 1. Missing Dots** From WSIS to the Global Digital Compact, global digital cooperation and governance have come through ups and downs. From a digital justice standpoint, what would be the elements? Can we plot the institutional and issue-based deficits?
11.20-11.55 AM	**Round 2. Connecting Lines** To further digital justice, how can we reinvigorate WSIS implementation? How can we make the WSIS action lines speak to the contemporary digital moment?
11.55-12.35 PM	**Round 3. Moving the agenda** Part 1 - Reflections on Rounds 1 and 2 - CS representatives Part 2 - Group work • What are the elements of a strategic civil society agenda for digital justice in the WSIS+20 moment? What do we want to push back and what do we want to further/build? (negative and positive agenda) • What are priority actions at global and national level for engagement with governments and non-government stakeholders?
12.35-12.45 PM	**Report back and Wrap up**