

OUTCOME DOCUMENT NATIONAL WORKSHOP ON WSIS+20 REVIEW



Date: **May 28, 2025**

Location: **Accra City Hotel, Accra, Ghana**



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In light of the ongoing WSIS+20 review process, the Media Foundation for West Africa (MFWA), in collaboration with Global Partners Digital (GPD) and the Global Network Initiative, convened a national workshop on May 28, 2025. The workshop aimed to mobilize diverse stakeholders, including representatives from government, civil society, academia, and the private sector, to reflect on Ghana's progress in achieving the goals set forth by the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) and to identify national priorities for future digital governance. The gathering provided a platform for candid discussions, enabling participants to articulate challenges and collaboratively develop recommendations that will contribute to shaping Ghana's position in global digital governance frameworks.



OBJECTIVES OF THE WORKSHOP

The workshop had the following objectives:

- 01 Enhance Awareness:** To increase understanding among Ghanaian stakeholders regarding the WSIS+20 review process and the mechanisms of global digital governance.
- 02 Identify National Priorities:** To facilitate the articulation of key national priorities and policy messages that will guide Ghana's engagement in the WSIS+20 and the Global Digital Compact processes.
- 03 Facilitate Dialogue:** To promote multistakeholder participation and dialogue among various sectors, ensuring that diverse perspectives inform digital governance and policy formulation.
- 04 Verify Research:** To review and update a country-specific research and national digital policy priorities, ensuring they reflect current realities and future prospects.



KEY MESSAGES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

National Messages for the WSIS+20 Process

- **Commitment to WSIS Continuity:** Ghana reaffirms its unwavering support for the continuation of the WSIS process, including the Internet Governance Forum (IGF), recognizing its critical role in fostering inclusive digital governance.
- **Harmonization of Legal Frameworks:** A call for the harmonisation of legal and policy frameworks across areas such as data governance, ICT, cybersecurity, and artificial intelligence (AI) to ensure coherence and effectiveness in digital governance.
- **Focus on Digital Literacy and Inclusion:** Emphasizing the need for comprehensive strategies that facilitate equitable access to digital resources, including devices, local language support, and affordability measures that address the digital divide.
- **Inclusive AI Governance:** Advocating for AI policies that are ethical, inclusive, and tailored to the unique context of Ghana, ensuring that the benefits of AI technologies are accessible to all.
- **Structured National Data Systems:** Highlighting the importance of developing structured, interoperable national data systems that can enhance decision-making and support AI and other digital initiatives.
- **Collaborative Policy Development:** Encouraging collaborative approaches between government and civil society to create inclusive policy strategies that prioritize citizens' rights and developmental needs.

Stakeholder Priorities

During breakout sessions, participants identified several key priorities that need to be addressed by both governmental and non-governmental stakeholders to advance Ghana's digital agenda:

1. **Democratizing Digital Skills:** Promoting digital equity through initiatives that enhance digital skills and literacy among all citizens.
2. **Improved and Meaningful Access:** Ensuring that all individuals, especially marginalized groups, have meaningful access to digital technologies and information.
3. **Policy Coherence and Harmonization:** There's the need for coherence in government policies impacting digitization, ensuring alignment across national strategies, such as the National AI Strategy and the Ghana Digital Economy Policy.
4. **Implementation and Compliance:** Recognizing the necessity for effective implementation of existing laws and policies, with an emphasis on simplifying compliance for stakeholders.
5. **Resource Commitment:** Securing adequate human and financial resources at regional, national, and international levels to support digital initiatives.
6. **Education and Awareness:** Enhancing public awareness and understanding of digital issues and rights through targeted educational programmes.
7. **Infrastructure Improvement:** Advocating for investments in critical digital infrastructure to broaden access and enhance service delivery.
8. **Local Adaptation of Standards:** There is the need to ensure that international standards and regulations are adapted to fit local cultural contexts and realities.
9. **Data Transparency and Governance:** Promoting transparency in data practices and governance, particularly in the context of AI and digital rights is key.

Follow-up Actions

At the end of the workshop, the following remarks were made:

1. **Consolidate National Priorities:** Develop a comprehensive list of national digital governance priorities that will be included in global consultations for the WSIS+20 review.
2. **Draft Stakeholder Position Paper:** Create a draft position paper that articulates Ghana's digital inclusion strategy and key recommendations for the WSIS+20 process.
3. **Establish a Multistakeholder Taskforce:** Initiate dialogue to form a national taskforce comprising diverse stakeholders to coordinate future contributions to the Global Digital Compact.
4. **Commit to Regular Engagements:** Establish mechanisms for ongoing documentation of stakeholder perspectives and regular engagements leading up to the WSIS+20 event.
5. **Strengthen Advocacy Efforts:** Reinforce the MFWA's role as a proactive advocate for inclusive digital rights and governance frameworks, ensuring that local voices are amplified in global discussions.





CONCLUSION

The WSIS+20 national workshop in Ghana successfully brought together a diverse group of stakeholders, reaffirming the importance of multistakeholder engagement in shaping the country's digital governance journey. The discussions illuminated both legacy challenges and emerging opportunities in the digital landscape, generating valuable insights and recommendations that will inform Ghana's contributions at the regional and global levels. As the WSIS+20 review process advances, it is imperative that Ghana maintains its commitment to an inclusive, rights-respecting, and responsive digital development agenda that serves the needs of all citizens.

APPENDIX

Participating Organizations

- Media Foundation for West Africa (MFWA)
- Global Partners Digital (GPD)
- Ministry of Communication, Digital Technology and Innovations
- Ghana Domain Name Registry (GDNR)
- Ghana Statistical Service
- Internet Society Ghana Chapter
- Targeted Rights Initiative
- Ghana Investment Funds for Electronic Communications (GIFEC)
- Ghana Chamber of Telecommunications
- Cyber Security Authority (CSA)
- National Information Technology Agency (NITA)
- MTN
- School of Information and Communication, University of Ghana
- Ghana Internet Governance Forum Secretariat
- Data Protection Commission
- Institute of Digital Marketing and Communications Ghana
- Internet Society Ghana Chapter
- Penplusbytes
- Child Online Africa
- Representative of G.A Sarpong & Co (Law Firm)

AGENDA

- Opening Session and Welcome Remarks
- An overview of the workshop and project objectives
- History of WSIS and its significance
- WSIS+20: Process so far, Key Actors, Negotiations and Processes
- Country engagement in WSIS+20
- Country-level priorities and positions on key issues
- Breakout session: Stakeholder perspectives, key messages, and recommendations
- Next steps
- Closing remarks and end of workshop





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