UNITED NATIONS
الاسكوا
ESCWA

Shared Prosperity Dignified Life

Closed Government Discussion Panel in Preparation for the Fourth Arab Consultative Conference on the Review Process of the World Summit on the Information Society +20

(In-Person/Virtual, Cairo, July 1-2, 2025)

© Copyright ESCWA. All rights reserved. No part of this presentation in all its property may be used or reproduced in any form without written permission

UNITED NATIONS
الاسكوا
ESCWA

Shared Prosperity Dignified Life

Comparative matrix: WSIS+10 Outcome (UNGA A/RES/70/125, 2015) ↔ WSIS+20 Elements Paper (20 Jun 2025)

(Shows how each 2015 cluster re-appears, evolves, or is absent in the 2025 Elements draft; flags completely new themes).

Ayman El-Sherbiny, Chief of ICT Policies, Digital Cooperation and Development at ESCWA

© Copyright ESCWA. All rights reserved. No part of this presentation in all its property may be used or reproduced in any form without written permission

Comparative matrix
WSIS+10 Outcome (UNGA A/RES/70/125, 2015) ↔ WSIS+20 Elements Paper (20 Jun 2025) (1/2)

2015 Resolution A/RES/70/125	Paragraph span	2025 Elements Paper cluster(s)	Continuity & shifts (2015 → 2025)	What's new in 2025	Still missing / weak
Preamble & reaffirmations	§ 1-11	Intro & guiding principles (¶ 1-12)	Same people-centred vision; 2025 ties WSIS directly to Global Digital Compact (GDC) & Pact for the Future.	Explicit GDC linkage.	—
1.1 Bridging digital divides	§ 12-22	Bridging digital divides (¶ 28-35)	Both stress connectivity, gender & disability gaps; 2025 shifts focus from "basic access" to **"meaningful, affordable access."**	"Meaningful-connectivity" metrics.	Arabic-content gap & multilingual UX still implicit, not explicit.
1.2 Enabling environment	§ 23-33	Enabling environment (¶ 36-38)	Regulatory issues remain; 2025 highlights policy coherence amid AI/data rules.	Reference to **innovation-regulation balance.**	Spectrum policy & OSS mentions softer.
1.3 Financial mechanisms	§ 34-40	Financial mechanisms (¶ 39-42)	Persistent funding gap; 2025 stresses data-centre/AI infra investment.	Call for **targeted AI & data-economy finance.**	No mention yet of Digital Solidarity Fund revival.
Human rights online	§ 41-47	Human rights & ethical dimensions (¶ 43-50)	Same rights language; 2025 adds content integrity & generative-AI ethics.	Online information integrity / deepfakes.	Explicit Journalists-safety clause weaker.
Confidence & security in ICTs	§ 48-54	Confidence & security (¶ 51-56)	Cybersecurity threads continue; 2025 cites 2024 Cybercrime Convention draft.	Reference to emerging **cybercrime treaty.**	Capacity-building financing options thin.

© Copyright ESCWA. All rights reserved. No part of this presentation in all its property may be used or reproduced in any form without written permission

Comparative matrix
WSIS+10 Outcome (UNGA A/RES/70/125, 2015) ↔ WSIS+20 Elements Paper (20 Jun 2025) (2/2)

2015 Resolution A/RES/70/125	Paragraph span	2025 Elements Paper cluster(s)	Continuity & shifts (2015 → 2025)	What's new in 2025	Still missing / weak
Internet governance (IGF, multistakeholder)	§ 55-63	Internet governance (¶ 57-64)	IGF renewal again flagged; 2025 warns of fragmentation.	Warning on **technical + policy fragmentation risks.**	Concrete IGF-funding solution absent.
Enhanced cooperation debate	§ 64-65	Internet-gov cluster – same ¶	2025 repeats "enhanced cooperation" line—stalemate persists.	—	No roadmap to resolve divergence.
Follow-up & review modalities	§ 66-71	Follow-up & review (¶ 85) + Monitoring & measurement (¶ 82-84)	2025 decouples metrics (cluster 14) from governance of review (cluster 15).	**Meaningful-connectivity indicators** proposed.	How annual SG reports fit still vague.
WSIS Forum & implementation support	§ 72-74	None (assumed to persist; not explicit)	WSIS Forum role not spelled out yet—may appear in Zero Draft.	—	Need to reaffirm WSIS Forum / regional fora.
UN-system action-line coordination	§ 75-79	Capacity-building (¶ 77-81) + Enabling env.	2025 emphasises system-wide coherence, esp. AI.	Call for **coherent capacity-building ecosystem.**	Regional-commission role (ESCWA, etc.) only implied.
Next review cycle & WSIS+20 prep	§ 80-85	Intro + Follow-up & review (¶ 85)	2015 looked ahead to 2025; Elements Paper defines process for Zero Draft.	—	Concrete timeline beyond Zero Draft absent.
—	—	**Completely new 2025 clusters**	—	**Digital economy** (¶ 17-20) • **Social & cultural development** (¶ 21-24) • **Environmental impacts** (¶ 25-27) • **Data governance** (¶ 65-69) • **Artificial intelligence** (¶ 70-76)	Opportunity for Arab States to inject regional priorities into these brand-new areas (e.g., Arabic AI/LLM ecosystem, green-tech finance).

© Copyright ESCWA. All rights reserved. No part of this presentation in all its property may be used or reproduced in any form without written permission

High-level snapshot — How the 2025 “Elements Paper” echoes and departs from the 2015 WSIS + 10 outcome (1/2)

	Strong continuity **(what stays the same)**	Key departures / additions **(what changes or appears for the first time)**
Foundational vision	• Still cites the WSIS 2003-05 legacy and insists on a **people-centred, inclusive, development-oriented** Information Society.• Re-affirms multistakeholder cooperation and the need to bridge digital divides.	• 2025 explicitly anchors WSIS follow-up in the Global Digital Compact and the **Pact for the Future**—ties missing in 2015.
Bridging the divides	• Both highlight connectivity, gender, disability, affordability gaps.	• 2025 pivots from “basic access” to “meaningful, affordable access” and signals forthcoming **meaningful-connectivity** indicators.
Regulatory / enabling environment	• Ongoing call for coherent national ICT policies, legal certainty and innovation-friendly rules.	• 2025 foregrounds AI- and data-policy coherence, asking governments to balance innovation with safeguards; spectrum and open-source are less visible.
Financing & investment	• Persistent acknowledgement of public/private/ODA gaps in the Global South.	• New emphasis on AI-ready / data-centre infrastructure finance; still no revival of the Digital Solidarity Fund.
Human-rights lens	• Same commitment to universality of rights online and offline.	• Fresh focus on information integrity, deep-fakes and generative-AI ethics—themes absent in 2015; 2015’s strong journalist-safety wording is weaker.
Trust, security & cyber	• Continues the cybersecurity / capacity-building storyline and references international law.	• Adds the draft UN cybercrime convention (2024) and broader “confidence” framing; funding solutions still thin.
Internet governance & IGF	• Repeats need for an open, interoperable Internet and proposes renewing the IGF mandate.	• 2025 warns explicitly about Internet fragmentation and geo-political splintering; but still lacks a concrete fix for IGF financing.

© Copyright ESCWA. All rights reserved. No part of this presentation in all its property may be used or reproduced in any form without written permission

High-level snapshot — How the 2025 “Elements Paper” echoes and departs from the 2015 WSIS + 10 outcome (2/2)

	Strong continuity (what stays the same)	Key departures / additions (what changes or appears for the first time)
Enhanced cooperation	• 2015 and 2025 both acknowledge divergent views and kick the can to CSTD—stalemate unchanged.	• No new pathway proposed; remains a negotiation flashpoint.
Measurement & follow-up	• Annual SG reports and the CSTD remain the review machinery.	• 2025 carves out a separate **monitoring cluster** (metrics before modality) and promises new SDG-aligned indicators—details pending in Zero Draft.
Institutional platforms	• 2015 celebrated the **WSIS Forum** as the annual multi-stakeholder hub and named UNGIS & regional commissions as key actors.	• The Elements Paper is silent on the WSIS Forum and only hints at regional-commission roles—leaving space for Arab states to insist on ESCWA’s visibility.
Entirely new 2025 themes	—	• Five clusters that did **not exist** in 2015: **Digital economy, Social & cultural development, Environmental impacts, Data governance, Artificial intelligence**—opening broad policy territory (e.g., Arabic AI/LLMs, green tech, data sovereignty).

© Copyright ESCWA. All rights reserved. No part of this presentation in all its property may be used or reproduced in any form without written permission

Key takeaways

- **Core DNA**—vision, multistakeholder ethos, digital-divide focus, human-rights recognition, IGF renewal—remains intact.
- **Strategic upgrades** come in the form of the GDC linkage, a quality-of-access paradigm ("meaningful connectivity"), and brand-new clusters on AI, data governance, the digital economy, and environmental sustainability.
- **Noticeable gaps**: an explicit WSIS Forum role, concrete financing mechanisms (Digital Solidarity Fund, IGF budget), a roadmap for enhanced cooperation, and any tailored language on Arabic digital presence or multilingual AI—all areas where the Arab bloc can press for insertions as the Zero Draft is negotiated.

© Copyright ESCWA. All rights reserved. No part of this presentation in all its property may be used or reproduced in any form without written permission

UNITED NATIONS
الاسكوا
ESCWA

Shared Prosperity Dignified Life