

# TOWARDS AN ICT ARAB STRATEGY 2025

Economic And Social Commission For Western Asia



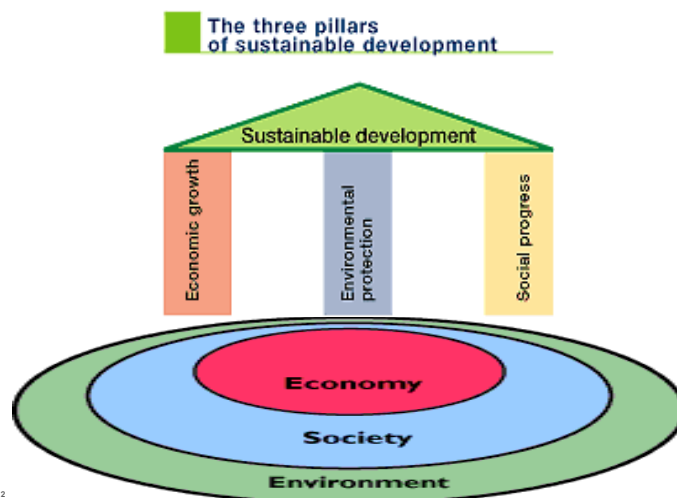
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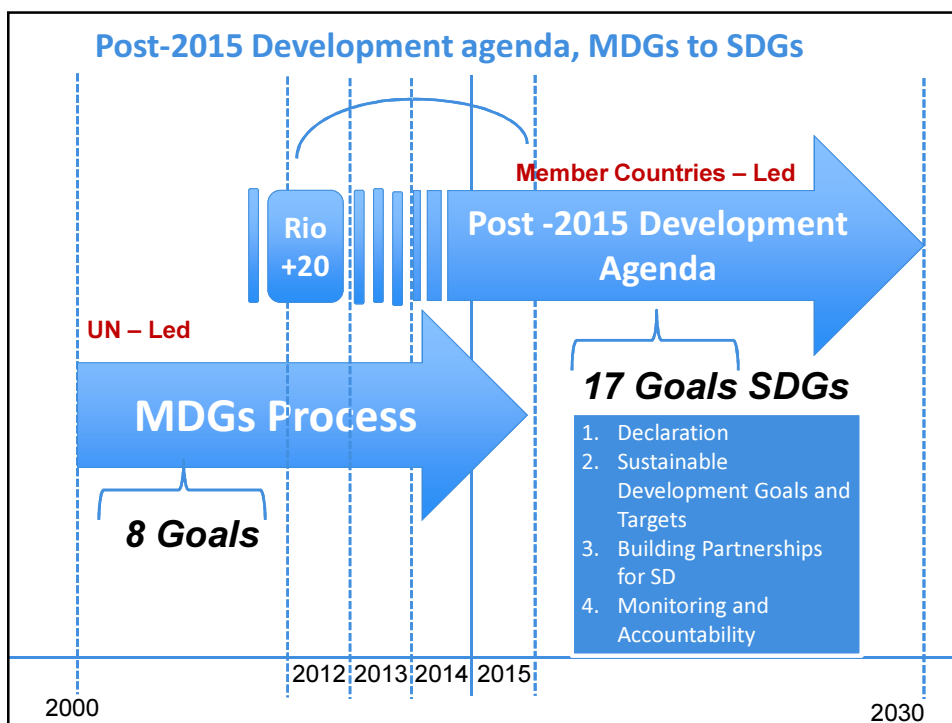
BY:  
AYMAN EL-SHERBINY


## A. Strategic Perspective

### 1. WSIS and SDGs



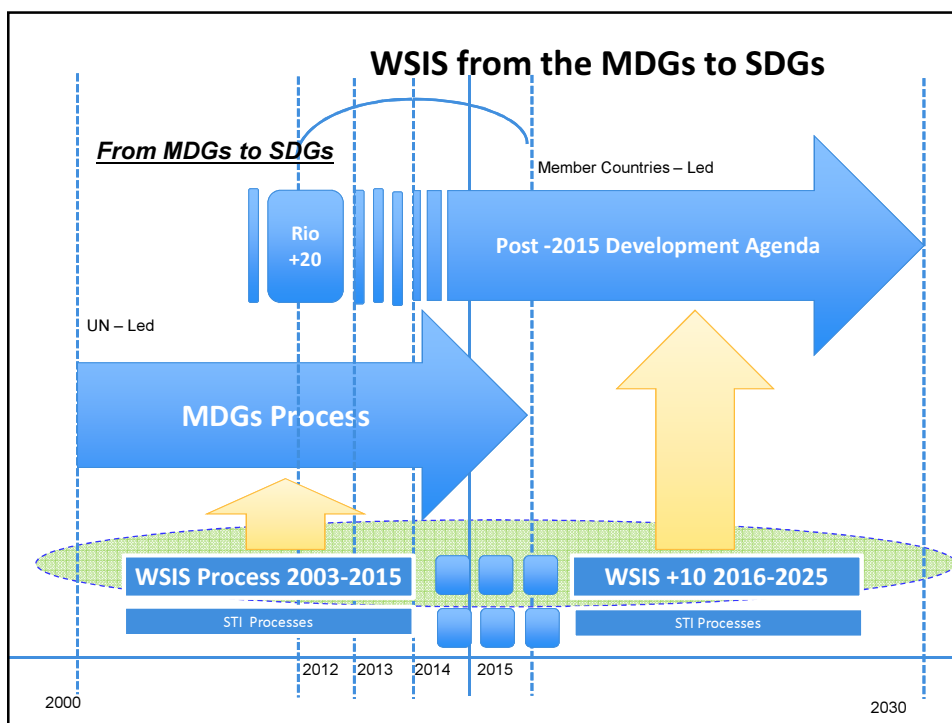
Page 2



 **world summit  
on the information society**  
Geneva 2003 - Tunis 2005

**WSIS 11  
Action  
Lines**

- C1. The role of public governance authorities 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 the use of ICTs
- C6. Enabling environment
- C7. ICT Applications
  - E-government
  - E-business
  - E-learning
  - E-health
  - E-employment
  - E-environment
  - E-agriculture
  - 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



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## WSIS 11 Action Lines

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- C10. Ethical dimensions of the Information Society
- C11. International and regional cooperation



## Sustainable Development Goals

- Goal 1** End poverty in all its forms everywhere
- Goal 2** End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture
- Goal 3** Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all
- Goal 4** Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
- Goal 5** Achieve gender equality and empower all women
- Goal 6** Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all
- Goal 7** Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all
- Goal 8** Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all
- Goal 9** Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation
- Goal 10** Reduce inequality within and among countries

## Sustainable Development Goals

- Goal 11** Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable
- Goal 12** Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns
- Goal 13** Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts\*
- Goal 14** Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development
- Goal 15** Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss
- Goal 16** Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels
- Goal 17** Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development

*\* Acknowledging that the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change is the primary international, intergovernmental forum for negotiating the global response to climate change*

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## ICT Centricity in the SDGs

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) has the footprint of ICT in all of the goals, particularly **Goals 9 and 17**.

**Goal 9** refers explicitly to infrastructure, including **ICT (Information and Communication Technologies) Infrastructure, industrialisation and innovation, and is a stand-alone goal** which indicates a strong footprint of Technology, including ICTs in the post-2015 development agenda.

**Goal 17 is cross-cutting** and concerned with the means of implementation of the SDGs at large. Hence, contributing to this goal is actually a vehicle to **contribute to the implementation of SDGs**.

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## WSIS+10 and SDGs

### Outcomes of the WSIS Forum 2015 “Innovating Together: Enabling ICTs for Sustainable Development”, ITU Headquarters, Geneva, 25–29 May 2015

- The WSIS 2015 Forum attracted more than 1800 WSIS Stakeholders from more than 140 countries.
- Several high-level representatives of the wider WSIS Stakeholder community graced the Forum with more than 60 ministers and deputies, several ambassadors, CEOs and Civil Society leaders contributing passionately towards the programme of the Forum.
- The Forum has proven to be an efficient mechanism for coordination of multistakeholder implementation activities, information exchange, creation of knowledge, sharing of best practices and continues to provide assistance in developing multistakeholder and public/private partnerships to advance development goals.
- This forum provided structured opportunities to network, learn and participate in multi-stakeholder discussions and consultations on WSIS implementation.
- The outcomes of the WSIS Forum 2015 were presented on the last day, 29th May, and submitted to the Commission on Science and Technology (CSTD), the UN General Assembly and ITU Council
- **WSIS - SDG Matrix (Linking WSIS Action Lines with Sustainable Development Goals).**

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## WSIS 11 Action Lines

### Action Line

- C1. The role of public governance authorities and all stakeholders in the promotion of ICTs for development
- C2. Information and communication infrastructure
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- C9. Media
- C10. Ethical dimensions of the Information Society
- C11. International and regional cooperation

### I. WSIS Action Lines -SDGs Matrix (at a glance)

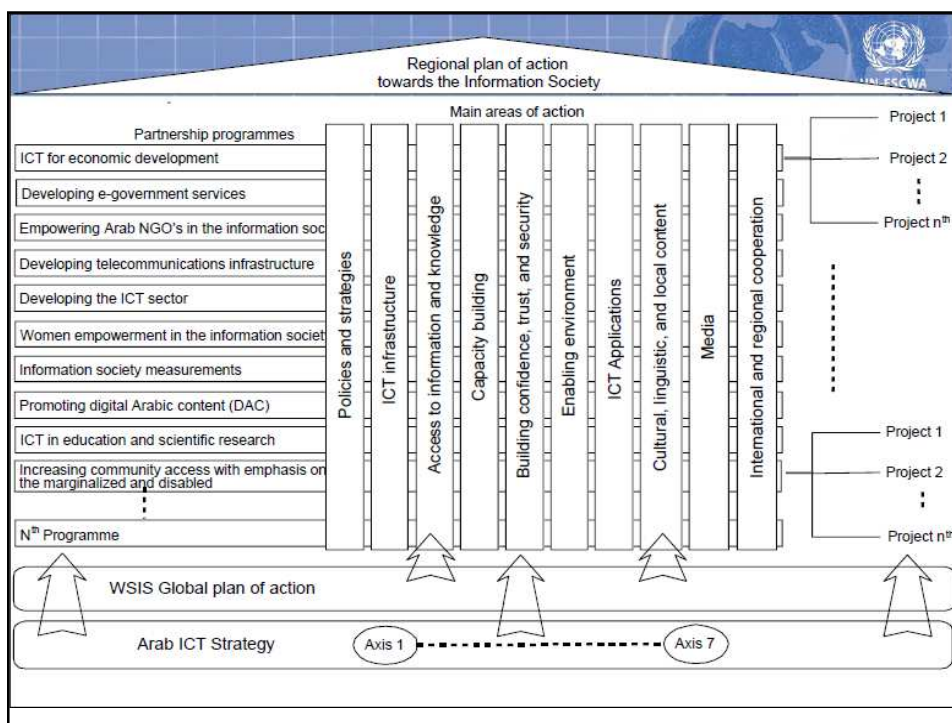
	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	C6	e-gov	e-bus	e-lea	e-hea	e-emp	e-env	e-agr	e-sci	C8	C9	C10	C11
SDG 1																		
SDG 2																		
SDG 3																		
SDG 4																		
SDG 5																		
SDG 6																		
SDG 7																		
SDG 8																		
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SDG 15																		
SDG 16																		
SDG 17																		

Page 13

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### III. WSIS Action Lines and SDGs Matrix

WSIS Action Lines	SDGs
<b>C1: The role of governments and all stakeholders in the promotion of ICTs for development</b>	Goal 1, 3.8, 3.d, Goal 5, 10.c, 16.5, 16.6, 16.10, 17.18
<b>C2: Information and communication infrastructure: an essential foundation for the Information Society</b>	1.4, 8.2, 9.1, 9.a, 9.c, 11.5, 11.b
<b>C3: Access to information knowledge</b>	Goal 1, Goal 2, Goal 3, Goal 4, Goal 5, Goal 6, Goal 7, Goal 8, Goal 9, Goal 10, Goal 11, Goal 12, Goal 13, Goal 14, Goal 15, Goal 16, Goal 17
<b>C4: Capacity building</b>	1.b, 2, 3.7, 3.h, 3.d, 4.4, 4.7, 5.5, 5.b, 6.a, 12.7, 12.8, 12.a, 12.b, 13.2, 13.3, 13.b, 14.a, 16.a, 17.9, 17.18
<b>C5: Building confidence and security in the use of ICTs</b>	1.4, 4.1, 4.3, 4.8, 5.b, 7.1, 7.a, 7.b, 8.1, 9.1, 9.c, 11.3, 11.b, 16.2, 17.8
<b>C6: Enabling environment</b>	2.a, 4.4, 5.b, 8.2, 8.3, 9.1, 9.c, 10.3, 11.3, 11.b, 16.3, 16.6, 16.7, 16.10, 16.b, 17.6, 17.14, 17.16
<b>C7 ICT Applications: I. e-government</b>	9.c, 16.6, 16.7, 16.10, 17.8
<b>C7 ICT Applications: II. e-business</b>	1.4, 2.3.5.b, 8.3, 8.9, 8.10, 9.3, 17.11
<b>C7 ICT Applications: III. e-learning</b>	Goal 4
<b>C7 ICT Applications: IV. e-health</b>	1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 2.1.2.2, Goal 3, 3.3, 3.8, 5.6, 5.b, 17.8, 17.19
<b>C7 ICT Applications: V. e-employment</b>	4.5, 8.5, 10.2, 12.6, 17.9
<b>C7 ICT Applications: VI. e-environment</b>	9.4, 11.6, 11.b, 13.1, 13.3, 13.b, Goal 14, Goal 15
<b>C7 ICT Applications: VII. e-agriculture</b>	1.5, 2.3.2, 4.2.a, 3.d, Goal 4, 5.5, 8.2, 9.1, 9.c, 12.8, 13.1, 13.3, 17.16, 17.17
<b>C7 ICT Applications: VIII. e-cleanse</b>	1.5, 4.7, 6.1, 6.a, 7.a, 13.1, 13.2, 13.3, 14.a, 15.9, 17.6, 17.7
<b>C8: Cultural diversity and identity, linguistic diversity and local content</b>	2, 4.7, 6.b, 8.3, 8.9, 11.4, 12.b
<b>C9: Media</b>	5.b, 9.c, 12.8, 16.10
<b>C10: Ethical dimensions of the Information Society</b>	1.5, 2.3.3.8, 4.7, 5.1, 8.36, 9.1, 10.2, 10.3, 11.3, 12.8, 13.3, 16.7, 16.10, 17.6, 17.7, 17.8, 17.18, 17.19
<b>C11: International and regional cooperation</b>	17.9, 17.16, 17.17



## UN-ESCWA Journey with WSIS

- ESCWA's journey with the WSIS started in 2002 upon the establishment of the ICT Division.
- Convening of the **First Regional Preparatory Conference in Beirut, February 2003**, in support for the region in its preparation for the WSIS 2003 in Geneva.
- Convening a series of **ESCWA High-Level Roundtables in 2004 followed by the Second Preparatory Conference in Damascus, November 2004** in support for the region in its preparation for WSIS 2005 in Tunis.
- Efforts resulted in the formulation of the **Regional Plan of Action for building the Information Society, in 2004**



## UN-ESCWA Journey with WSIS

- WSIS efforts also included active engagement in its process, which included:
  - Convening a *Regional Conference for the follow-up on the Implementation of the WSIS*, in Damascus, June 2009.
  - The review processes *WSIS+10*, *post-2015 development agenda* and *annual WSIS Forums*
  - Processes of the *Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD)*, the annual *Internet Governance Forums (IGFs)*.
  - Active engagement in the *Arab Working Group on ICT Strategy*, and the formulation of the *Arab ICT Strategy* and a set of ICT indicators that will be deployed to measure the progress in implementing the Arab ICT Strategy in the Arab countries.

Page 17

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## UN-ESCWA Journey with WSIS

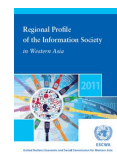
- WSIS efforts also included:
  - ESCWA succeeded in assisting countries to give priority to ICTs as a tool for building the information society, reducing the digital divide, and supporting socioeconomic development.
  - Within the WSIS process and outcomes, ICTs has taken a key role in realizing the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Page 18

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## UN-ESCWA Journey with WSIS

- WSIS related Activities also included tens of conferences, experts meetings and publications, a selected list is below:
  - **Regional Plan of Action for Building the Information Society** (2004, reviewed in 2009)
  - Support the formulation of the **Arab ICT strategy**
  - **National and Regional Profiling of the Information Society** (six biennial issues: 2003, 2005, 2007, 2009, 2011 and 2013)
  - **Information Society Portal for the ESCWA Region (ISPER)** <http://isper.escwa.un.org> (2006)



Page 19

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## UN-ESCWA Journey with WSIS (cont'd)

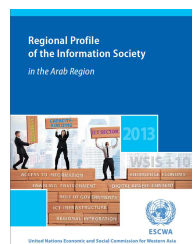
- Launch and patronage of the **Arab Internet Governance Forum (Arab IGF)**
- Strengthen the Arabic identity on the Internet through the design, launch and support for **Top Level Domain Names**
- Formulation of **Linguistic Guidelines for the Use of the Arabic Language in Internet Domains**
- Launch of **Directives of Cyber Legislation**
- **Promoting Digital Arabic Content (DAC) and the DAC industry**
- Strengthening **measurement of the Information Society** in the Arab region
- Support the **establishment of STI Observatories**

Page 20

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## UN-ESCWA Journey with WSIS (Cont'd)

- Evolving with the WSIS process, the work of the UN-ESCWA developed to cover various thematic areas, including: Internet Governance, e-Governments, Openness and privacy, Cyber security and cyber safety, e-Democracy and e-participation, and Competitiveness of the ICT Sector.



Page 21

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## UN-ESCWA Journey with WSIS (cont'd)

Support other ESCWA Divisions in relation to

- ESCWA Statistical Information System,
- Green Economy project,
- Regional initiative on climate change in the Arab region,
- Good Governance and Citizen Participation,
- Infrastructure Rehabilitation project in Syria,
- 5-Year Development Plan in Saudi Arabia.

Page 22

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WSIS Action Lines	
ANNEX	
Action Line	Possible moderators/facilitators
C1. The role of public governance authorities and all stakeholders in the promotion of ICTs for development	ECOSOC/UN Regional Commissions/ITU
C2. Information and communication infrastructure	ITU
C3. Access to information and knowledge	ITU/UNESCO
C4. Capacity building	UNDP/UNESCO/ITU/UNCTAD
C5. Building confidence and security in the use of ICTs	ITU
C6. Enabling environment	ITU/UNDP/UN REGIONAL COMMISSIONS/UNCTAD
C7. ICT Applications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>E-government</li> <li>E-business</li> <li>E-learning</li> <li>E-health</li> <li>E-employment</li> <li>E-environment</li> <li>E-agriculture</li> <li>E-science</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UNDP/ITU</li> <li>WTO/UNCTAD/ITU/UPU</li> <li>UNESCO/ITU/UNIDO</li> <li>WHO/ITU</li> <li>ILO/ITU</li> <li>WHO/WMO/UNEP/UN-Habitat/ITU/ICAO</li> <li>FAO/ITU</li> <li>UNESCO/ITU/UNCTAD</li> </ul>
C8. Cultural diversity and identity, linguistic diversity and local content	UNESCO
C9. Media	UNESCO
C10. Ethical dimensions of the Information Society	UNESCO/ECOSOC
C11. International and regional cooperation	UN Regional Commissions/ UNDP/ITU/UNESCO/ECOSOC

## Main Action Lines and Outputs

- The Division activities and outputs relate to a number of WSIS action lines, and include projects, trainings, studies, reports. Selected activities are listed below for the main action lines covered by the Division efforts in line with the WSIS process:

### C1: THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENTS AND ALL STAKEHOLDERS IN THE PROMOTION OF ICT4D

- Study entitled *Towards an Integrated Knowledge Society in the Arab Countries: Strategies and Implementation Modalities*
- Guidelines for the Formulation and Implementation of ICT Policies and Strategies

## Main Action Lines and Outputs (Cont'd)

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### C2: INFRASTRUCTURE

- Study entitled *Improving the Communications Infrastructure, Services and Policies in ESCWA Member States*
- Study entitled *Broadband for Development in the ESCWA Region: Enhancing Access to ICT Services in a Global Knowledge Society*

### C3: ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE

- Project entitled *Knowledge Networks through ICT Access Points for Disadvantaged Communities (KN4DC)*
- Project entitled *Promoting New Technologies for Employment and Poverty Alleviation in the ESCWA Member Countries*

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## Main Action Lines and Outputs (Cont'd)

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### C4: CAPACITY BUILDING

- Project entitled Academy of ICT Essentials for Government Leaders in the ESCWA Region (AIGLE)
- Publication entitled *Impact of ICT on Arab Youth: Education, Employment and Social Change*
- Project entitled *The Iraqi Networking Academies*
- ESCWA Statistical Information System (ESIS)

### C5: BUILDING CONFIDENCE AND SECURITY IN THE USE OF ICTS

- Study entitled *Building Trust in E-Services in the ESCWA Region*

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## Main Action Lines and Outputs (Cont'd)

### C6: ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

- Project entitled Regional Harmonization of Cyber Legislation to Promote the Knowledge Society in the Arab World (2009-13)
- ESCWA Cyber Legislations Directives and app, and Cyber Legislation Policy Note (2012-13)
- Study entitled Models for Cyber Legislation in ESCWA Member Countries (2007)

### C7: ICT APPLICATIONS: BENEFITS IN ALL ASPECTS OF LIFE

- Project entitled Regional Harmonization of Cyber Legislation to Promote the Knowledge Society in the Arab World (2009-13)
- Cyber legislations directives and app, and policy note (2012-13)
- Study entitled Models for Cyber Legislation in ESCWA Member Countries (2007)
- Study entitled E-Government Strategies in Arab Countries: Current Status and Development Prospects



Page 27

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## Main Action Lines and Outputs (Cont'd)

### C8: CULTURAL DIVERSITY AND IDENTITY, LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY AND LOCAL CONTENT

- Study entitled Business Models for Digital Arabic Content (2013)
- Study entitled Status of the Digital Arabic Content Industry in the ESCWA Region (2012)
- Project entitled Promoting the Digital Arabic Content (DAC) Industry through Incubation (two phases)
- ESCWA and League of Arab States application for two generic Top Level Domain Names (gTLDs) - .arab and its Arabic equivalent
- Establishing the Arabic Domain Names Task Force and the Arabic Script in Internationalized Domain Names Working Group (2003-10)
- Project entitled Arabic Domain Names System (three phases)
- Preliminary Feasibility study on Establishment of the Domain Name Registry for the ".arab" and its equivalent in Arabic generic TLDs

Page 28

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## Main Action Lines and Outputs (Cont'd)

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### **C11: INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL COOPERATION** VARIOUS ACTIVITIES

#### **C12 - ADDITIONAL - ICT SECTOR DEVELOPMENT**

- *Arab Forum on the ICT Sector (2013)*
- *Study entitled Competitiveness of the ICT Sector in the Arab Region: Innovation and Investment Imperatives (2013)*
- *Study entitled Information and Communication Technology Financing, Venture Capital and Entrepreneurship in the Region (2007)*
- *Study entitled Promoting the ICT Sector to Meet the Challenges of the Knowledge Economy*

Page 29

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## Main Action Lines and Outputs (Cont'd)

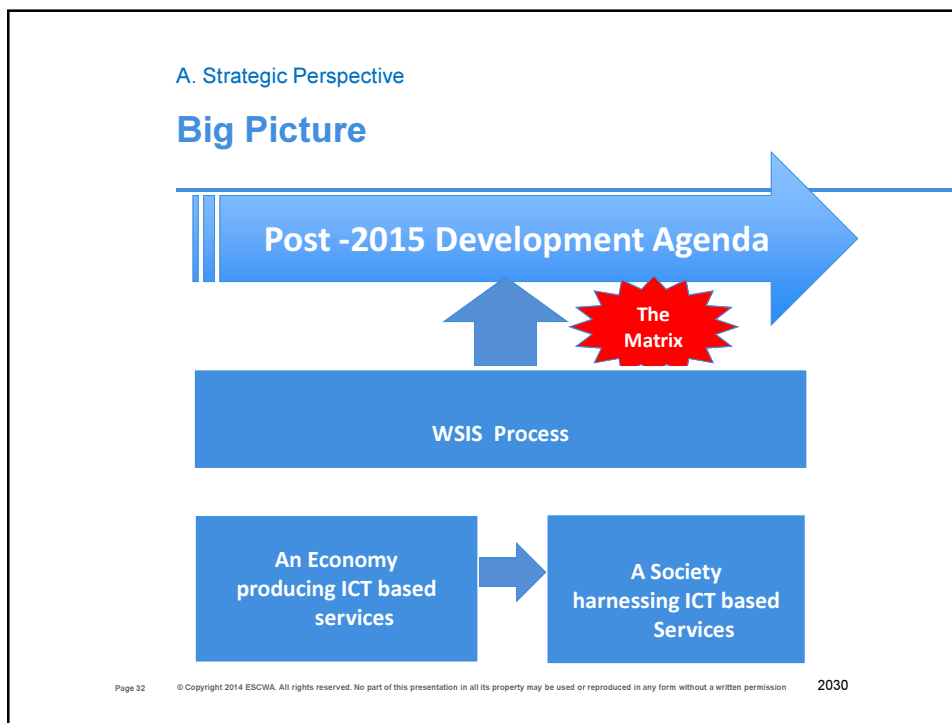
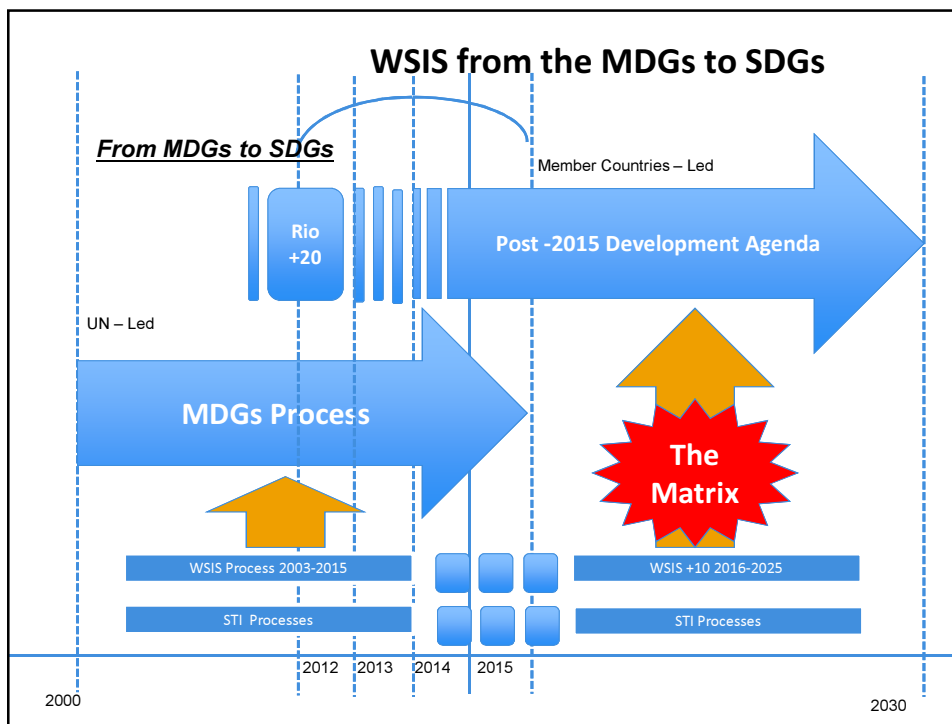
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### **C13 - ADDITIONAL - INTERNET GOVERNANCE/ ENHANCED COOPERATION**

- *Initiative on Arab Dialogue on Internet Governance (ArabDIG)*
- *Publication entitled Arab Regional Roadmap for Internet Governance: Framework, Principles and Objectives*
- *Establishment of the Arab Internet Governance Forum (Arab IGF) and convening of two annual Arab IGF meetings.*

Page 30

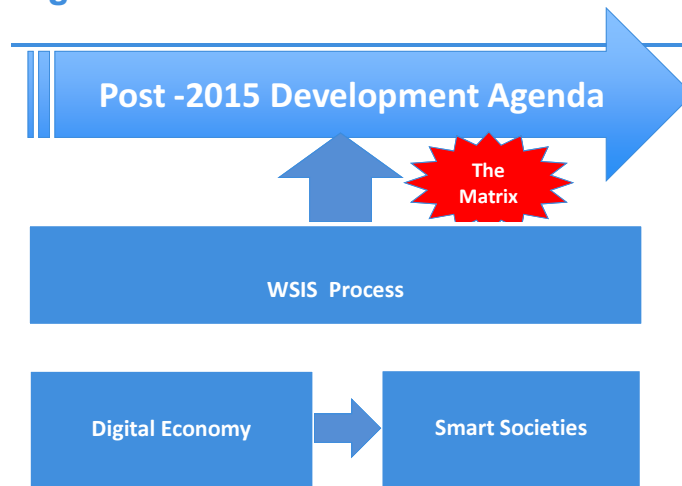
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## A. Strategic Perspective

## Big Picture



Page 33

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2030

## A. Strategic Perspective

## 2 Digital Economy

- The digital economy permeates the world economy in its various sectors. ICTs are transforming social interactions & relations, communication and broadcast networks are converging, and devices and objects are more connected to form the Internet of Things.
- Growing fast and driving economic growth, the digital economy is transforming society as a whole, and it has the Internet, broadband networks, mobile applications, IT services and hardware as its foundations.
- Examining the ICT sector, telecom markets, and broadband infrastructure and services and related indicators would highlight the region's capacity and role of its ICTs industries in economic growth and wealth creation in the digital economy paradigm.

Page 34

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## A. Strategic Perspective

### 2 Digital Economy

- In 2016, the **magnitude of the Internet economy in the G-20 countries** is expected to expand to **4.2 trillion USD** (Boston Consulting Group, 2014), and it is crucial for the Arab region to benefit from the **opportunities** offered from the growing digital and Internet economy at both the regional and global levels. In 2015, **the ICT venture capital** investment is increasing and back to its highest level after the dot com bubble.
- It is essential for the Arab countries to develop their **national digital agendas** for boosting economic growth, and to aspire to develop their **digital economies** in a manner that promotes **ICT venture capital investments**, increases **employment** and contributes to **alleviation of poverty and inequality**.

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## A. Strategic Perspective

### 3. Smart Societies

- The term "**Smart**" describes a better way of implementing activities in the various sectors of the economy, and reflects on the activities that respect sustainability and involve investing in ICTs and connectivity and in Internet-enabled services that allow the administration and people to face the life and urban challenges. **Smart societies** use smart **methods** in their development, and have the **knowledge and skills** that enable them to be **competitive** in a global and developing world.

According to the ITU Focus Group on Smart Sustainable Cities (2014),

***"A smart sustainable city uses ICTs to provide enhanced quality of life to its citizens, improved efficiency of services and sustainable development. Such a city meets the needs of today without sacrificing the needs of future generations with respect to economic, social and environmental aspects".***

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## A. Strategic Perspective

### 3 Smart Societies

The smart society has evolved with the use of **smart technologies** and through the enhanced **government-citizen relationship** and more effective and efficient **procedures and smart e-government services/tools**, and the **cooperation** amongst the various sectors of the economy. The people in smart societies are sometimes called "**digital citizens**" and are able to thrive within a developed information society and knowledge economy where ICTs, innovation and knowledge management are key factors in the social and economic development processes of both cities and societies.

The development of the **ICT sector** contributes to the transformation to smart societies, where the use of **ICTs and related innovative solutions** can support better life and work conditions of all citizens and make the living ecosystems more inclusive, greener and sustainable. Other sectors, such as education and health, transport and real estate, and social development sectors are also main pillars in a smart society.

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## Selected Activities from ESCWA's WP 2016-2017

### Meetings

- EGM on WSIS Beyond 2015: Strategic Perspectives, Selected Priority Issues and Action Plans for the Arab Region
- EGM on Internet Governance beyond 2015: Phase I & II (2016 & 2017)

### Report and Publications

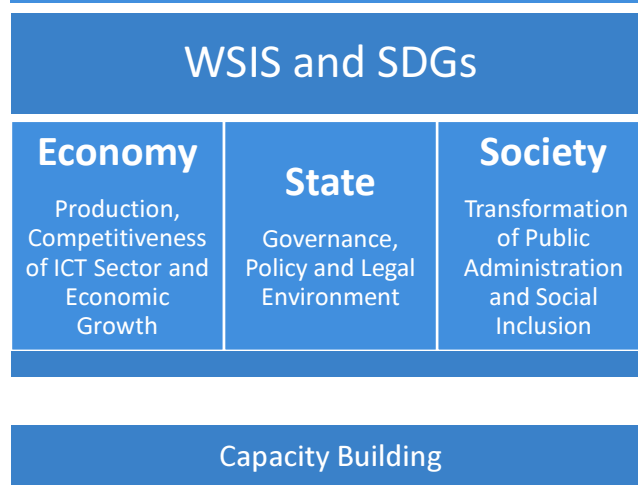
- Report on the progress achieved in implementing the AIGF process
- Information Society and Digital Economy: Strategic Perspectives and Selected Priority Issues for the Arab Region (non-recurrent)
- Internet Governance Beyond 2015 (technical material)
- Smart Governments and Smart Sectors for Smart Societies in the Arab Region (technical material)

### Assistance

- Capacity Building on ICT4D including wider dissemination of ESCWA's Module on Internet Governance (AIGLE)
- Assistance to the League of Arab States and its Organizations on ICT Policies and Strategies, Internet Governance, Arabic Domain Names, and Space and Satellite Technologies (2016/2017)

## B. Arab Hub on Digital Economy and Smart Societies

### B.1 Strategic Tracks – Activities



Page 39

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40  
YEARS