World Summit on the Information Society

WSIS FORUM 2011

Outcome Document

Hosted by: ITU

WSIS Forum: working together towards 2015 — World Summit Geneva 2003 Tunis 2005 on the Information Society — Turning targets into action

Organised by: ITU, UNESCO, UNITED NATIONS UNCTAD, UNDP

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H.E. Mr Haruna Iddrisu, Minister of Communications, Ghana, noted that the Government of Ghana is priming ICTs as major driver of societal and economical development and is committed to implementing the WSIS Action Lines. The Minister outlined e-initiatives for health, education, broadband, and making Ghana a source for ICT outsourcing. He noted that challenges included cyberfraud, locally known as *sakawa,* and the dumping of e-waste.

H.E. Mr Kapil Sibal, Minister for Communications and Information Technology, India, noted that the reality of the world today is that the rich already have access, and that the challenge is how to reach the marginalized. Marginalized communities lack economic power and access to technology, and also face information barriers due to language. He asked if we, as a community, can develop opensourced information for the marginalized and, if so, how will the marginalized be able to access it?
He noted that these are the types of questions that ITU should be addressing. In closing, he noted the importance of education and healthcare, and also brought attention to the quality of education versus the quantity. He ended with the question, "Can we make platforms to deliver quality information?".

Questions	**Responses/ Commemts**
Dr Tim Unwin, Royal Holloway, University of London asked Inveneo CEO, Kristin Peterson, what the private sector would like to see more from governments.	**Ms Kristin Peterson** answered with the recommendation that governments develop a plan for their rural budgets and also to further integrate ICT initiatives into a more holistic approach. **H.E. Ms Suvi Lindén**, Minister of Communications, Finland, noted that 10 per cent of Finland's development budget goes towards ICTs and said that infrastructure alone is not enough and needs to be integrated with other disciplines. She also noted that Finland has declared broadband

	to be a universal right and hopes that other countries follow suit. **H.E. Mr Kapil Sibal**, Minister for Communications and Information Technology, India, noted that they now have a broadband plan to bring widespread access. They also have a plan to connect every university in a knowledge-sharing environment. He also added that the world is ready to share information, civil society is ready to absorb it, and that government and the private sector are ready to participate in this process. He suggested that every country should have an electronic service delivery bill, which would provide government services information electronically. He closed with the reminder that the right to information is part of the right to freedom of speech. **H.E. Mr Haruna Iddrisu**, Minister of Communications, Ghana, recognized the gap between rural and urban areas, and highlighted Ghana's efforts to close this gap. They also have telecommunication centres which exclusively employ disabled persons in ICT roles. **H.E. Mr Méndez Menendez Luis Eduardo**, Superintendente, Superintendencia General de Electricidad y Telecomunicaciones, El Salvador, noted that in El Salvador the broadband issue is being worked on with neighbouring countries and that

	mobile technologies are being rolled out for rural populations. **H.E. Lic. Dionisio A. Pérez Jácome Friscione**, Secretario de Comunicaciones y Transportes, Mexico, expressed Mexico's interest in learning from other countries in regards to bridging the rural versus urban connectivity divide. **Mr Houlin Zhao**, Deputy Secretary-General, ITU, related his personal knowledge of China's successful implementation of connecting rural villages.

Webcast of this high-level opening session is available at:
http://www.itu.int/ibs/WSIS/201105forum/index.html

Questions	**Responses/ Comments**
FANCV (remote participant) asked how the digital divide can be reduced with respect to early warning systems.	**Prof. Peter Bruck, Chairman of the Board of Directors, World Summit Award** stated that winning the WSA allows the winner to network with other people in their country and all over the world. **Mr Mark Summers, Chief Innovation Officer, Inveneo**, gave the example of the cholera epidemic in Haiti, where telecom operators sent automatic SMS to people known to be travelling through infected areas.

Ms Alison Hornery (remote participant) asked about the "teach the teacher" approach.	**Mr John Davies, Intel Corporation, Vice President Sales and Marketing Group, General Manager Intel World Ahead Program** gave the example of India, where female entrepreneurs provide services to their villages and also give training in their villages and others.

Country Workshop: Implementation of WSIS Action Lines in India

Monday, 16 May, 14:45–16:15, Room XI

Brief on Presentations made during WSIS 2011

It was indeed a great honour and privilege for India to share the advances it has made on the WSIS Action Lines and the progress made in leveraging ICTs for mitigating poverty and moving towards the Millennium Development Goals. The sharing of experiences on WSIS Action Lines and on using ICTs for MDGs by various countries has greatly benefitted India and the deliberations during the WSIS 2011 Forum surely helped all participants to evolve a common strategy for common challenges across nations and cultures. Even though India has made giant strides in the field of IT and is known the world over for its IT capabilities, the country needs to take certain policy-level initiatives which will ensure inclusive growth and empowerment in order to ensure that the benefits of ICTs reach everyone and empowers them with knowledge and information.

The Indian economy is one of the fastest growing economies. In terms of purchasing power parity, it ranks the fourth largest in the world. With more than eight per cent growth of GDP in last five years despite the global downturn, the Indian economy has displayed its strength and potential to generate enough resources to improve the quality of life of the average Indian. Progressive liberalization of government policies, rapidly expanding services sector, FDI growth, rising global competitiveness and increasing domestic demand have all contributed to a strong economy. By 2020, the economy is expected to even quadruple its current size.

However, what is even more important is for the fruits of higher economic growth to be equitably distributed among 1.2 billion Indians. On one hand there are a number of entrepreneurs who are on the Forbes list of successful entrepreneurs, but on the other hand a sizable part of the population struggles with poverty. While celebrating entrepreneurial success of the country, it must not be forgotten that strong governance is needed to ensure "inclusive growth", especially for the most disadvantaged sections of society.
India seeks to achieve these objectives by using ICTs to touch and transform the lives of its citizens.
The endeavour is to not only promote the growth of IT Industry, but to use ICTs to empower citizens and ensure transparency and accountability in governance through reliable and efficient delivery of public services. The key pillars through which the above objectives are sought to be attained include:

- **e-Government:** Providing e-infrastructure for delivery of e-services
- **e-Innovation / R & D:** Enabling creation of Innovation / R&D Infrastructure in emerging areas of ICT&E
- **e-Learning:** Providing support for development of e-Skills and Knowledge network
- **e-Security:** Securing India's cyberspace
- **e-Inclusion:** Promoting the use of ICTs for more inclusive growth.

While e-Government is primarily seen as a means to improve efficiencies in the internal workings of the government, the driving force behind various e-Governance initiatives in India is to improve governance. India's policy-makers have a vision of inclusive growth, reducing poverty and bridging the various divides that still continue to fragment society. This vision can only be achieved if there is a significant improvement in the quality of governance. If attributes of good governance are transparency, efficiency, responsiveness, cost effectiveness and accountability, e-Governance is the means to attain these attributers through the use of technology and process re-engineering.
It is in this context, the **National e-Governance Plan (NeGP) of the Government of India was launched by the Government in May 2006 with a vision to "***Make all government services accessible to the common man in his locality, throughout common service delivery outlets and ensure efficiency,*

transparency and reliability of such services at affordable costs to realize the basic needs of the common man".

The National e-Governance Plan has been formulated to provide e-services to citizens belonging to all sections of society, at their doorsteps, in a cost-effective manner. Although several "computerization" initiatives were taken up in the country in the past, the National e-Governance Plan has one major difference from the previous "computerization" initiatives: the focus on delivery of services to citizens. The Plan lays strong emphasis on outputs and outcomes, services and service levels. This marks an enormous shift from the earlier paradigm of a more input-related or technology-oriented approach to a more citizen-centric approach.

It has been nearly five years since the approval of the NeGP and a long journey has been made towards achieving the vision of the NeGP. The path has not been easy; it has been dotted with many challenges – political, administrative and technological – some of which have been overcome successfully.

Perhaps the most important challenge towards enabling a solution on such a large scale has been to provide access: access to broadband, access to technology, access to content. In this regard, providing the necessary infrastructure has been critical to enable access to services, especially in remote areas. Considering the challenges of low literacy levels and low ownership of broadband and personal computing devices, the NeGP lays emphasis on "access" to web-enabled services through common internet kiosks on a public–private partnership (PPP) model.

The Common Services Centre (CSC) scheme is perhaps the largest internet kiosk initiative in the world. These centres are envisaged as the front-end delivery points for government, private and social services and provide access to education, telemedicine, public services, remote banking and entertainment to hitherto unreached sections of society. These broadband- and Internet-enabled CSCs will provide a much needed connectivity to the networked world that exists beyond the realm of villages, and will significantly influence day-to-day lives.

The CSCs are envisaged as an important catalyst/agent in the economic development process that would help in giving a boost to the rural economy, where nearly 70 per cent of the population lives. Besides providing access to the Government's web-enabled services, these centres are also providing a livelihood to a large number of rural people as these centres are set up and managed by local rural entrepreneurs on a PPP model.

It is believed that this single initiative will unlock the immense economic potential laying latent in the rural India. It is also envisaged to connect all *panchayats* of the country by optical fibre networks. The most common service being offered in these centres today is **e-learning**. In addition to teaching computer skills, these centres can play a great role in providing **quality education** in rural areas where teachers are not present. Similarly these centres can also play a key role in providing basic health-care services in rural areas. Telemedicine solutions have a huge potential in ensuring access to good quality and cost-efficient **health services** for all. It is also planned to use ICTs to upgrade skills and impart new skills so as to improve the employability of the rural population. ICTs are also being leveraged for enhancing productivity and incomes in rural areas, particularly for **the agriculture and related sectors**.

Another challenge that India faces is the issue of **financial inclusion**. Large sections of society in rural areas have access neither to banks nor to credit, rendering them unable to leverage financial instruments for their economic growth. In order to mitigate this challenge, the Working Group of Reserve Bank of India has allowed CSCs, amongst others, to work as banking correspondents on a pilot basis. The Reserve Bank of India is of the opinion that the only way to bridge this financial divide is to use technology.

Today, after much effort, there is a robust chain of outlets for the banks to use for financial inclusion. It is the endeavour of the Department of Information and Communication Technology to ensure that all rural CSCs become business correspondents of banks and ensure delivery of financial services, NREGS wage payments and government welfare payments to the beneficiaries in the most remote parts of the country. Another significant development has been the explosive growth of mobile telephony in the country. The Government of India has decided to leverage the outreach enabled by mobile devices and is currently developing an **m-Governance** framework which will enable delivery of select critical public services over mobile and other hand-held devices.

The Government of India believes that a citizen-centric government is something much more fundamental than selected departments providing services to citizens. It involves rethinking the entire service delivery system – prioritizing areas important to citizens and then associating all agencies across all levels of government to provide services and leverage e-Governance tools accordingly. As compared to small homogeneous countries, this is a huge challenge in countries like India which have a multi-tiered administrative and

political set-up. There are over 2,50,000 local selfgoverning, democratically elected institutions called Panchayats at the village level. There are over 6,000 municipalities and 600 districts. In this context, the Electronic Service Delivery Act has been created, which will mandate provisioning of all public services of the Central Government Ministries/Departments through electronic means only, thereby abolishing manual delivery of such services in a phased manner. The draft act is already in the public domain and there have been very significant inputs and suggestions for the same. With the enactment of the Electronic Service Delivery Law, the possibility of e-Government projects becoming pervasive in all domains of public services is increasingly becoming a reality. E-Governance projects are characterized by large outlays and often implemented through public–private partnerships. Given the limited penetration of PCs and broadband, challenges of basic literacy, computer literacy and English literacy – which is the current currency of internet – it is important to engage with identified and potential service seekers and other stakeholders of e-Governance projects. In order to meaningfully engage with citizens, a detailed study of needs, stakeholders and frequency must be undertaken. The engagement must be done in a planned manner with responsibility for the same assigned to a specific team. Towards this objective, India is evolving a citizen engagement framework which ensures active involvement of Citizens in e-Governance projects right from the conceptualization stage. This also includes leveraging social media and new media for citizen engagement.

The challenges to governance in the region are diverse and multifaceted. Such challenges include providing quality education and health to the common citizen, effective implementation of public service programmes, fighting corruption, and the dissemination of necessary information to the common citizen in the most remote corner of the country.

There are two common issues which require deliberation by practitioners to promote e-Governance. First and foremost is the need to fast track e-Governance implementations by cutting down the time spent in lengthy procurement cycles and implementation cycles. This is more important in IT projects because of the rapid obsolescence rate of technology. New technologies such as cloud computing will make it possible to provide faster implementations. In India, the Government is exploring the possibility of creating Government-wide platforms to be used by multiple departments across all tiers of the Government.

The other key challenge is to build institutional capacities. e-Governance projects are inherently process transformation and change management projects in which technology plays a very small though a very critical role. There are enormous gaps in the ability to internally conceptualize and implement large e-Government projects. While initially these gaps may be filled through short-term measures of hiring professionals from industry, from a long-term perspective, capacity must be built internally by imparting appropriate training to civil servants, engineers and elected functionaries, at all levels of government through skill-building programmes. With these planned initiatives, India is truly embarking on its *Journey from Knowledge Economy to Inclusive Information Society.*

Country Workshop: e.Oman – a strategy that transformed the society with e-skilled in less than five years
Monday, 16 May, 14:45–16:15, Room V

The Information Technology Authority (ITA) recently represented Oman at the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) 2011 in Geneva, Switzerland, on the 16th and 17th of May 2011. Hosted by the International Telecommunications Union (ITU), the ITA participated in a number of activities at the 2011 WSIS Forum, which was conducted at the Conference Centre of the International Labour Organization (ILO). WSIS 2011 is the world's largest annual gathering of the world's 'ICT for development' community, including UN agencies, governments, and civil society and ICT industry representatives.

First on the agenda, the ITA conducted a Country Workshop, moderated by Mr Talal Al Rahbi, Deputy CEO of Operations at ITA, which included a presentation on ITA activities. Following this presentation, the ITA facilitated two Thematic Workshops: one which was presented by the Ministry of Health (MoH), and a second one by the Ministry of Civil Services (MoCS). In addition to Mr Al Rahbi, the Oman delegation attending this year's WSIS Forum included H.E. Mr Yahya Salim Al-Wahaibi, Ambassador, and Permanent Representative of The Sultanate Oman to the United Nations & World Trade Organization (WTO), and Ms Shariffa Al Meskary, Director of International Relations and Information at ITA, among other representatives of ITA, the MoH and the MoCS. H.E. Dr Ahmed bin Mohammed bin Obaid Al Sa'eedi,

Minister of Health, already in Geneva attending a World Health Organization (WHO) meeting, attended the MoH Thematic Workshop.

In his opening speech in the Country Workshop on Oman, HE Yahya Salim Al-Wahaibi, Ambassador, and Permanent Representative of The Sultanate Oman to the United Nations & World Trade Organization (WTO) said, "Under the guidance of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said, the Sultanate of Oman has been transformed into a modern state with a stable and strong growing economy and increasing economic opportunities. With the goal of diversification of the economy and the transformation of the sultanate into a knowledge-based society and the establishment of the TRA and ITA, the ICT sectors have witnessed rapid progress in recent years. The Digital Oman strategy, or e.Oman for short, has laid the vision and the road map for the realization of an information society where the government delivers customer-centric services, harnessing modern technology." He continued, "e.Oman comprises a wide range of initiatives and services designed and created to improve the efficiency of government services, and empower individuals with skills and knowledge to meet society's needs and expectations, and to direct Oman towards becoming a knowledge-based economy. In this regard, Oman's Information Technology Authority, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Civil Services and the National Association of Cancer Awareness have recently been named winners of the 2011 UN Public Services Award (UNPSA).

The ITA was a first-place winner with its transformation of society through the e.Oman communication strategy in the category of advancing knowledge management in government. This achievement is a testament to the Sultanate's unwavering desire to excel at providing exceptional public service. We are pleased to be part of the WSIS Forum 2011, which is brings together governments, private sector, international organizations, civil society, academia and other individuals from all over the world. In conclusion, I am pleased to extend my gratitude to ITU as well as to all those who contributed in the preparation of the workshops."

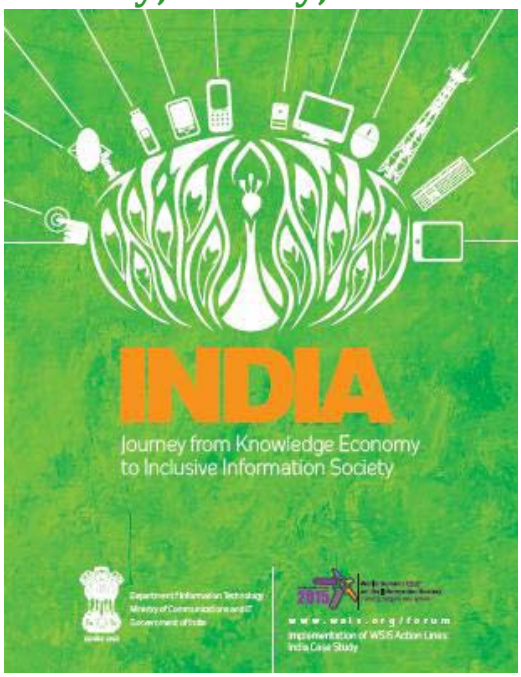
WSIS evolved as a means of recognizing the importance of the revolution in ICTs as a means of shaping the future of the world. World leaders decided that a global vision and a global dialogue were needed to build the framework of an all-inclusive and equitable Information Society. Thus, WSIS was born. The goal of WSIS is to achieve a common vision, desire and commitment to build a citizen-centric, inclusive and development-oriented Information Society where everyone can create, access, utilize and share information. Begun as a

unique two-phase UN summit aimed at addressing the issues raised by ICTs through a structured and inclusive approach at the national, regional and international levels, the first phase of the Summit was hosted by ITU in December 2003, and Tunisia
hosted the second phase in Tunis in November 2005. The Tunis Agenda for the Information Society states that the WSIS implementation mechanism at the international level should be organized taking into account the themes and Action Lines in the Geneva Plan of Action, and moderated or facilitated by UN agencies when appropriate.
The annual WSIS Forum builds upon the tradition of annual follow-up meetings for the implementation of WSIS outcomes, which are normally scheduled in May, to coincide with celebrations of the World Telecommunication and Information Society Day (WTISD) to mark ITU's founding in 1865. The Forum provides opportunities to network and participate in multistakeholder discussions and consultations on WSIS implementation. These include meetings for facilitators, thematic workshops and speed exchanges on critical issues. Contributing to this year's WSIS Forum, Oman is one of 20 ICT ministries from around the world presenting their achievements in workshops and at meetings, with the total number of participants exceeding 1,400.
This year, e.Oman was proud to sponsor the series of workshops being conducted at the Forum. In the Country Workshop about Oman, WSIS Forum participants learned how, in less than forty years, the Sultanate has gone from an era of widespread illiteracy to a high-tech age where the youth receive ICT education at university level. Oman now offers digital solutions throughout society while simultaneously raising awareness, as well as building ICT capacity and fostering e-skills in its population to reap the benefits of new technology. It aims to create an effective government–community–citizen infrastructure that provides better public services to its people.
The workshop focused on two main points, namely: how to develop and promote programmes in order to eradicate illiteracy using ICTs at a national level; and, how to promote e-literacy skills for all by designing and offering courses of public administration.

Publication: India Journey from Knowledge Economy to Inclusive Information Society – Profiles of Progress

World Summit on the Information Society
Turning targets into action

Monday, 16 May, 14:00–14:30 Room IV



During the past two decades, India has emerged as one of the fastest growing economies in the world. The progress that India has made can be attributed to reforms in the financial sector, progressive and pro-development policies of successive governments, the collaborative efforts of the corporate and civil society organizations and, above all, the role of ICTs and new media technologies in enabling information enabled growth at the bottom of the pyramid.

India has various challenges in moving ahead on the goals for improving Governance and ensuring Inclusive Growth. Challenges include a population of more than 1.2 billion, almost 7 per cent rural population, and a multilingual, multi-religious and multi-ethnic society. India has a Federal Constitution with the 35 States and Union Territories having very well defined jurisdiction, especially in the arena of public service delivery. Despite this, India has been able to move forward on the path of growth and development and is amongst one of the fastest growing economies of the world.

Today, India is the third largest economy in the world and ICTs are a major contributor in India's GDP. India's GDP growth has been impressive and it is currently 8.6 per cent. In the FY 2011-12, it is expected that the growth rate will be 9 per cent, positioning India as the second fastest growing economy after China. However, this rowth is neither sufficient nor sustainable. This is because even today, after more than 60 years of Independence, more than one-third of the population is still below poverty line.

This means that about 450 million people do not earn more than a dollar per day; leaving them unable to take care of their families, and without the means to access education, health services, and other essential services. It is important to note here that in order to make this growth sustainable and take care of these 450 million people, it is necessary to make this growth inclusive. To make society and this growth inclusive, it is necessary to make information, public services, good quality health care and employment accessible to each and every resident of the country in a cost-effective, transparent and reliable manner.

This is sought to be achieved by having a *Rights Based Policy Framework.* In 2005, the historic Right to Information Act was passed which gave a legal right to citizens to get information. This was followed by Right to Employment through the enactment of the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act in 2006, which gave a right to all citizens to demand and obtain employment, and the Right to Education Act of 2009 which makes it mandatory for all children between the age 6 to 14 to be admitted to schools.

Two more laws are in the process of being enacted – the Right to Food and the Right to Public Services. The Right to Food or the proposed Food Security Act seeks to give a legal right to all citizens to obtain 35 kgs of subsidized food grains every month. The most groundbreaking will be the Right to Public Services Act, which has already been enacted by several state governments.

The central Government has also proposed an Electronic Services Delivery Act which seeks to ensure mandatory electronic delivery of all public services in the next five years. The Government of India has been successful in inducing healthy policy competition among the states which, in turn, has been able to accelerate the overall development of the country.

The progressive policies of the Indian government such as the National e-Governance Plan (NeGP), Right to Information Act (RTI), National Urban Renewal Mission (NURM) National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS), National Rural Health Mission, and Sarva Siksha Abhiyaan (SSA) over the past decade has helped the country make a significant headway in tapping the potential of ICTs and new media technologies in rapidly progressing towards the achievement of MDGs, as well as transforming the country into a knowledge economy. These initiatives have resulted in increased communications, interaction and collaboration among citizens, governments, industry and service providers at various levels.

The Indian approach to the achievement of sustainable growth and inclusive development is a unique model of how a developing country has been able to contextualize the use of ICTs and new media technologies based upon its own priorities. While models adopted by the developed countries have their own lessons from which the Indian efforts have surely drawn benefits, the formulation of Indian policies has been based upon cultural and contextual needs of Indian citizens, government agencies, federal structure and the priorities of grass-roots communities. In that sense, Indian journey of transformation from the knowledge economy to inclusive information society is a unique model that may provide insight to other developing countries. Some of the salient features that make the Indian journey towards the transformation into inclusive information society are:

- Vibrant ICT industry
- Localized policy and deployment models suitable for the needs of a developing country
- Centralized planning and decentralized implementation approach
- Participative policy formulation marrying top-down and bottom-up approach

• Continuous assessment and performance management

The report "India – Journey from Knowledge Economy to Inclusive Information Society" provides a high-level update and an overview of the progress made by India in transforming itself info into an inclusive information society as well as progress on WSIS Action Lines.

India's national development plan for 2007-12 has reaffirmed its commitment to attaining the MDGs and relies strongly on the innovative use of ICTs and new media technologies for achieving the goal of transforming itself into an inclusive information society, thus adhering to the Action Lines as laid out in the WSIS declaration. In a sense, the targets laid down in the five-year plan are nationally dovetailed forms of the MDG targets, but by some measure, envisage faster results than what the MDGs defined for us to attain.

In India, the story of development, even in the midst of the global economic slow-down, has not been bleak. Advances are most evident where targeted interventions have been initiated, and where increased funding and improved institutional mechanism have stimulated better delivery of services and tools directly to those in need.

This can be seen in the universalization of primary education and gender parity in school education and literacy, fight against malaria and tuberculosis, immunization of children against deadly diseases, safe motherhood and reproductive care, access to safe drinking water, and development of telecommunications. This report on India's Journey from Knowledge Economy to Inclusive Information Society, which was launched during the India Country Workshop 2011, captures a glimpse of policy initiatives and the key projects that highlight India's achievements in the move towards the creation of an inclusive information society. It also covers, in detail, the actions carried out by the Government in terms of policy initiatives, and the efforts of other stakeholder groups in implementing these policy initiatives.

The initiatives mentioned are those that relate to the MDG agenda and the WSIS Action Lines. The report also chronicles Profiles of Progress, which is a compilation of case studies based on select projects from different domains pertaining to the innovative use of ICTs by government and stakeholder groups in various areas such as government, health, education and agriculture, etc. The presented cases are not an exhaustive list of all the initiatives but are a collection of some of the cases that correspond to WSIS Action Lines.

The Government of India has realized that in an era when technology is changing so fast and new media technologies such as mobiles are fast

becoming the primary mode of access for the majority of rural citizens, it is necessary to continuously evolve new policies and undertake initiatives so that the gaps between government policy, technology changes and citizen aspirations can be minimized. The Report also provides a glimpse of the key policy initiatives undertaken by government of India in the year 2010-2011. A brief description of the key initiatives such the mobile governance policy, electronic service delivery act, framework for citizen engagement in policy formulation and open data policy have been provided in the section entitled "The Way forward". These initiatives, if deployed successfully, have the potential to transform India into the world's first truly digital economy and inclusive information society.