DCDF2.0
2025
منتدى التعاون الرقمي والتنمية
Digital Cooperation and Development Forum
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وزارة الاقتــصاد الرقمي والريادة

The second edition of the
Digital Cooperation and Development Forum

First High-level Partners' Conference on the Arab Digital Agenda 2023-2033 (HLPC_ADA)

Seventh Conference of the Arab Internet Governance Forum (Arab IGF)

Fourth Arab High-level Forum on the World Summit on the Information Society and 2030 Agenda (Arab WSIS)

23–26 February 2025* | Amman, Jordan

* The Digital Cooperation and Development Forum (DCDF) 2025 is convened back-to-back with the fifth session of the ESCWA Committee on Technology for Development, held on 26–27 February 2025.

ARAB HIGH-LEVEL FORUM on WSIS and 2030 AGENDA for Sustainable Development

ITU

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United Nations
Department of Economic and Social Affairs

UN trade & development

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

World Health Organization

ARAB IGF
ARAB INTERNET GOVERNANCE FORUM
المنتدى العربي لحوكمة الإنترنت

2023-2033 الأجندة الرقمية العربية
Arab Digital Agenda

كلية محمد بن راشد للإدارة الحكومية
MOHAMMED BIN RASHID SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT

AICTO
الاتحاد العربي لتكنولوجيا المعلومات والاتصالات
ARAB FEDERATION FOR DIGITAL ECONOMY

DCDF 2025 Profile

Background

In 2020, the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) launched the Advancing Digital Cooperation and Development – Arab States Action Programme (ADCD-ASAP).

The second track of ADCD-ASAP is aimed at supporting policymakers and stakeholders in improving policies and practices related to digital cooperation and development through consolidated policy advocacy and dialogue channels. This will enable stakeholders to exchange expertise, share success stories and lessons learned, and harmonize standpoints on global and regional digital policies.

Within the framework of ADCD-ASAP and guided by the core principles of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), the global Internet Governance Forum (IGF), the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,[1] the United Nations Secretary-General's Roadmap for Digital Cooperation,[2] and the Secretary-General's Our Common Agenda report,[3] ESCWA, in partnership with the League of Arab States (LAS) and a number of key actors in the WSIS and IGF processes, including the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), is organizing the second edition of the Digital Cooperation and Development Forum (DCDF) in Amman, Jordan from 23 to 26 February 2025.

This event builds on the outcomes of DCDF 2021 and three regional consultative meetings organized by ESCWA in cooperation with the League of Arab States on 11 August 2020,[4] 3 December 2020[5] and 27 April 2021.[6] It is also based on follow-up inter-organizational meetings where participants from WSIS, IGF and the technical community shared their views and endorsed the idea of consolidating existing platforms for regional policy dialogue.

Participants unanimously agreed to hold the seventh edition of the Arab Internet Governance Forum (Arab IGF)[7] in conjunction with the fourth Arab High-level Forum on WSIS and 2030 Agenda.[8] The aim is to align the Arab track of the WSIS Forum with the Arab track of IGF and other related tracks, so as to increase opportunities for multilateral collaboration; maximize the mutual benefits of harnessing information and communication technologies (ICTs), the digital economy and digital transformation towards achieving inclusive sustainable development in the Arab region; and build forward better.

DCDF 2025 will be conducted over four days in February 2025, followed by a two-day meeting of the ESCWA Committee on Technology for Development. It will comprise several tracks, high-level segments, diverse thematic sessions and side events. It will also bring together relevant stakeholders representing public and private sectors, the technical community, academia, civil society, youth and international organizations.

DCDF 2025 provides an inclusive platform for all stakeholders to discuss priority issues in the Arab region relating to digital development and digital cooperation. Discussions

will focus on the digital future at the global and regional levels for the next decade and beyond. The dynamic format of the forum helps to build consensus on thematic digital development issues in the region, guided by major global and regional forums and declarations on the subject.

Objectives

O DCDF 2025 aims to enhance digital development and cooperation among Arab countries, and to inform regional and global forums on related issues, including the Arab Forum on Sustainable Development and the global High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

O This second edition of the DCDF also aims to adopt a progressive approach towards strengthening collaboration and advancing digital development and digital cooperation among the member States of ESCWA and a wide range of regional stakeholders.

O The event will enable engagement, dialogue and partnership among various stakeholders and experts from the Arab region on crucial issues pertaining to digital development and digital cooperation. It will provide opportunities to review and discuss interlinkages between the information society, digital economy and Internet governance under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Partners, segments and tracks

Operating under the One United Nations (One UN) initiative, the event will engage various United Nations organizations in addition to key regional organizations and national entities. It will involve several policy dialogues and policy advocacy platforms as follows:

A. First High-level Partners' Conference on the Arab Digital Agenda 2023–2033

This conference will include ministerial panels in addition to a special session to shed light on the implementation mechanisms of the Arab Digital Agenda 2023–2033.

B. Fourth High-level Forum on WSIS and 2030 Agenda (Arab WSIS)

The Arab WSIS will include several special sessions on various topics, including:

Infrastructure and the regulatory environment in the Arab region.

Cross-cutting issues (such as the World Economic Forum, environment and climate change) (ITU and ESCWA, in cooperation with the Food and Agriculture Organization, the Centre for Environment and Development for the Arab Region and Europe (CEDARE), UN-Water, the United Nations Environment Programme, etc.).

Human and cultural issues, media misinformation and mental health-related topics (in cooperation with UNESCO and the Word Health Organization).

Global and Arab WSIS processes

WSIS is a unique two-phase United Nations summit that was initiated to create an evolving multi-stakeholder platform to address ICT-related issues through a structured and inclusive approach at the national, regional and international levels. WSIS aims to achieve a common vision, goal and commitment to build a people-centric, inclusive and development-oriented information society where everyone can create, access, utilize and share information. The United Nations General Assembly resolution 56/183 of 21 December 2001 endorsed the holding of WSIS in two phases. The first phase took place in Geneva from 10 to 12 December 2003, and the second phase took place in Tunis from 16 to 18 November 2005. In 2003, the number of participants was 11,000, representing 175 countries; and in 2005, the number of participants was over 19,000, representing 174 countries.

The WSIS Forum represents the world's largest annual gathering of the 'ICT for development' community. The WSIS Forum, co-organized by ITU, UNESCO, the United Nations Development Programme and UNCTAD, in close collaboration with all WSIS action line facilitators/co-facilitators, has proven to be an efficient mechanism for coordinating multi-stakeholder engagement in implementation processes, exchanging information, creating knowledge and sharing best practices. The WSIS Forum continues to provide assistance in developing multi-stakeholder and public-private partnerships to advance development goals.

To fulfil its mandate, as stipulated in the Geneva Plan of Action and the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society, ESCWA as a United Nations regional commission has promoted and supported the implementation of WSIS processes at the regional level since WSIS inception in 2003. To advance WSIS, ESCWA assists member States in conducting national reviews. In addition, it periodically holds the Arab High-level Forum on WSIS and 2030 Agenda to review and follow up on the implementation of WSIS outcomes in Western Asia.

In 2015, the General Assembly resolution 70/125 created strong linkages between the WSIS process and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It requested a +20 review and mandated the Commission on Science and Technology for Development and regional commissions to spearhead this review during 2024 and 2025. ESCWA is taking a major role in this WSIS+20 review that will be presented to the eightieth session of the General Assembly in September 2025.

C. Seventh Arab Internet Governance Forum

The Arab IGF segment will encompass several plenary sessions on various topics, including:

- Artificial intelligence: ethics and legislation.
- Trust: data privacy and data governance.
- One Internet and digital sovereignty: building resilient Arab digital infrastructure.

Global and Arab IGF processes

IGF brings together various stakeholder groups, as equals, in discussions on public policy issues relating to the Internet. While there is no negotiated outcome, IGF informs and inspires policymakers in both the public and private sectors. At their annual meeting, delegates discuss, exchange information and share good practices. IGF facilitates common understanding on how to maximize Internet opportunities and address risks and challenges.

Established in 2012 by ESCWA and the League of Arab States serving as the umbrella organizations, the Arab IGF process is an essential mechanism for bottom-up and multi-stakeholder policy dialogue between Governments and various regional stakeholders. It contributes towards reaching a common understanding and enhancing collaboration on Internet-related policy issues.

As per the mandate of the Arab IGF, efforts were made to engage and ensure balanced representation of all stakeholders. ESCWA and the League of Arab States served as conveners, hosts and facilitators of its activities, conducting the process within the partnership framework and through the financial and in-kind contributions of international, regional and national partners. In 2016 and 2017, the Arab IGF process underwent a transformation exercise led by the joint ESCWA-LAS Arab IGF 2020 initiative. The initiative brought together representatives of different stakeholder groups engaged in Internet governance (Governments, the business sector, civil society, and the technical and academic community) from Arab countries to conduct a comprehensive survey, convene consultations and analyse the following priority areas of development for the Arab IGF process: objectives, structure and mechanisms; financing mechanisms; content and outputs; and communication, media and outreach. The results were used as the basis for developing a charter for the Arab IGF, and supported the development of the Second Arab Roadmap for Internet Governance.

Since its inception, the Arab IGF has held six annual meetings: the first in Kuwait in 2012, attended by over 300 participants; the second in Algiers in 2013, attended by some 800 participants; the third in Beirut (ESCWA) in 2014, attended by over 500 participants; the fourth in Beirut (Ogero) in 2015, attended by 650 participants; the fifth in Egypt in 2020, attended by 150 participants; and the sixth was hybrid in 2021 within the framework of DCDF 2021 and was attended by around 600 participants. The main output of those annual meetings was a set of key strategic messages to assist policymakers in the Arab region in decision-making on Internet governance.

D.   Special sessions

○ Special session on the launch of the Arab Digital Development Report 2.0.

○ Special session on the Arab Digital Agenda's implementation mechanisms.

○ Potentially, a session for the United Nations regional commissions.

E. Community engagement

In line with the inclusive and participatory nature of DCDF 2025, two open calls for submissions of session and workshop proposals have been sent to the main partners and key stakeholders.

○ **Call for session proposals to the Arab WSIS community**

All Arab WSIS stakeholders wishing to share their digital development experiences or engage in discussions around Arab WSIS thematic work pertaining to digital development and/or digital cooperation as a means towards implementing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), are encouraged to participate by submitting proposals for special sessions using the following online form: https://forms.office.com/e/AgDSC8YJ9p.

○ **Call for workshop proposals to the Arab IGF community**

The Arab IGF community, young people in particular, are encouraged to engage in workshops around the following five thematic areas: global and regional Internet governance ecosystems; access and inclusiveness; legal, policy and regulatory frameworks; digital economy and digital transformation; and human, cultural and behavioural issues related to digital platforms. Proposals for special sessions can be submitted using the following online form: https://forms.office.com/e/xtcTVcCDgJ.

Based on the different inputs from the Arab IGF and Arab WSIS communities, a general outline for the event, indicating the organizational layout of plenary sessions, tracks and proposed time and break slots, will be made available soon.

Outcomes

It is expected that this event will result in an outcome document on advancing digital cooperation and development in the Arab region, serving as a unique and streamlined multipartite regional collaboration platform.

Master plan of DCDF 2025

Closed meetings of working groups and technical committees

22 February

- Registration and networking

Second edition of the Digital Cooperation and Development Forum (DCDF 2025)

High-level segments of the DCDF 2025

23 February
- Registration and networking
- Opening ceremony of the First High-level Partners' Conference (HLPC_1)
- Ministerial meetings
- Outcome of the high-level segments

24 February
- Registration and networking
- Opening of the Fourth Arab High-level Forum on WSIS and 2030 Agenda (Arab WSIS)
- Opening of the Seventh Conference of the Arab Internet Governance Forum (Arab IGF)
- Sessions and workshops
- Sessions and workshops

25 February
- Registration and networking
- Sessions and workshops
- Sessions and workshops
- Sessions and workshops
- Sessions and workshops

26 February
- Registration and networking
- Sessions and workshops
- Sessions and workshops
- Conclusion and closing statements of DCDF 2025

The ESCWA Committee on Technology for Development

26 February
- Registration
- Opening of the fifth session of the ESCWA Committee on Technology for Development

27 February
- Registration
- Conclusion of the ESCWA Committee on Technology for Development

Legend

- Committee on Technology for Development
- Closed meetings of working groups and technical committees
- Parallel tracks/other events
- Arab Internet Governance Forum
- Arab High-level Forum on WSIS
- Ministerial/Senior officials' round tables
- High-level Partners' Conference on the ADA
- Opening or closing of events

Organization

○ ESCWA and the League of Arab States, in collaboration with their partners, are organizing DCDF 2025 from 23 to 26 February 2025.

○ DCDF 2025 is open to all stakeholders that are welcome to participate in dedicated sessions to highlight their own work and achievements in the ICT for development field, and to contribute to the event's key recommendations and outcomes.

Participants and registration

DCDF 2025 will bring together key stakeholders with interest in digital development and digital cooperation, including government policy and decision-making bodies, parliamentarians, representatives of the public and private sectors, civil society, the technical community and practitioners, the business sector, academia, non-governmental organizations, and international and regional organizations involved in developing the information society to achieve the SDGs in the Arab region. Registration is required through: https://indico.un.org/event/1013523.

Languages

○ Arabic and English are the working languages of DCDF 2025. Simultaneous interpretation will be available in English and Arabic.

Additional information and correspondence

A dedicated webpage is available online (https://dcdf-2025.unescwa.org), providing updated information on DCDF 2025. Further enquiries should be communicated to the event's focal point.

Mr. Ayman El-Sherbiny

Chief of ICT Policies, Digital Cooperation and Digital Development

ESCWA
Beirut, Lebanon
Tel: +961 1 978555
Fax: +961 1 981510/1/2

E-mail: escwa-dcdf@un.org
Website: www.unescwa.org

Endnotes

1. https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/21252030%20Agenda%20for%20Sustainable%20 Development%20web.pdf.

2. https://www.un.org/en/content/digital-cooperation-roadmap/assets/pdf/Roadmap_for_Digital_Cooperation_EN.pdf.

3. www.un.org/en/content/common-agenda-report/assets/pdf/Common_Agenda_Report_English.pdf.

4. WSIS Forum 2020 session on "Implementation of WSIS in the Arab Region: Ad hoc Multi-stakeholders Partners Consultations on potential consolidation of Arab WSIS with Arab IGF, Arab Digital Cooperation and/or other related Tracks, beyond 2020", 11 August 2020.

5. Second Regional Consultative Meeting on Arab Digital Cooperation and Development: Towards a Digital Decade of Action – through Digital Cooperation and Development – in the Arab Region, 3 December 2020.

6. WSIS Forum 2021 session on the "Third Regional Consultative Meeting on Arab Digital Cooperation and Development – Consolidated Regional Policy Dialogue Platforms", 27 April 2021.

7. The first Arab IGF was held in Kuwait in 2012, the second in Algiers in 2013, the third in Beirut in 2014, the fourth in Beirut in 2015, the fifth in Cairo in 2020 and the sixth edition of the Arab IGF was hosted in the framework of DCDF 2021.

8. The first Arab High-level Forum on WSIS and 2030 Agenda was held in Beirut in 2017, and the second Arab High-level Forum on WSIS and 2030 Agenda was held in Beirut in 2019.

DCDF 2.0

2025

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