

# The 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of the Arab International Digital Cooperation and Development Forum

1<sup>st</sup> High-Level Partner Conference on the  
Arab Digital Agenda (HLPC\_ADA)

7<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Arab Internet  
Governance Forum (Arab IGF)

4<sup>th</sup> Arab High-Level Forum on  
the World Summit on the Information Society and  
2030 Agenda (Arab WSIS)

3-6 November 2024\*  
Amman, Jordan

\* DCDF 2024 is convened back-to-back with the 5<sup>th</sup> Session of ESCWA Intergovernmental Committee on Technology for Development, 7-8 November 2024.



## Background

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

The aims of the second track of ADCD-ASAP include supporting policymakers and stakeholders in improving policy and practices by developing consolidated policy advocacy and policy dialogue channels. This will enable stakeholders to raise issues and exchange expertise; share status updates, progress, success stories and lessons learnt; and communicate 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;<sup>1</sup> the United Nations Secretary-General’s Roadmap on Digital Cooperation;<sup>2</sup> and the Secretary-General’s Our Common Agenda report,<sup>3</sup> 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 inaugural meeting of the Arab international Digital Cooperation and Development Forum (DCDF), to be held in Amman, Jordan from 3-6 November, 2024.

This event builds on the outcomes of the [DCDF 2021](#) and three consecutive regional consultative meetings that ESCWA organized in cooperation with LAS on 11 August 2020,<sup>4</sup> 3 December 2020<sup>5</sup> and 27 April 2021,<sup>6</sup> and on follow-up inter-organizational meetings at which participants from WSIS, IGF and the technical community shared their views and endorsed the idea of consolidating existing platforms for regional policy dialogue within the envisaged DCDF.

Participants unanimously agreed to hold the seventh meeting of the Arab Internet Governance Forum (Arab IGF)<sup>7</sup> in conjunction with the 4th Arab WSIS<sup>8</sup>. 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 optimize opportunities for multilateral collaboration; maximize the mutual benefits of harnessing ICTs, the digital economy and digital transformation towards achieving inclusive sustainable development in the Arab region; and build forward better.

DCDF 2024 will be conducted over 4 days during November of 2024, followed by 2 days closed meeting of the Inter-governmental Committee on Technology for Development. It will comprise several tracks, high-level segments, diverse thematic sessions, and side events. It will bring together relevant stakeholders representing public and private sectors, the technical community, academia, civil society, youth, and international organizations.

DCDF 2024 will provide an inclusive platform for all stakeholders to discuss priority issues in the Arab region relating to digital development and digital cooperation. Discussions will cover the Digital Future at the global and regional levels for the next decade and beyond. The dynamic format will set standards and build consensus on regional and thematic digital development issues, guided by major global and regional forums and declarations on the subject.



## Objectives

- DCDF 2024 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.
- This second edition of the Arab international DCDF aims to adopt a progressive approach towards strengthening collaboration and advancing digital development and digital cooperation among member States and a wide range of regional stakeholders.
- 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.



## 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, including the following:

### A. First High-Level Partners Conference on the Arab Digital Agenda 2023-2033

The first high-level partners conference on the Arab Digital Agenda 2023-2033 will include a special session on the ADA curtain raising in addition to ministerial panels.

### B. Fourth High-level Forum on WSIS and 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (Arab WSIS)

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

- 🗨️ Infrastructure and regulatory environment in the Arab region (in cooperation with ITU).
- 🗨️ Planet cross-cutting issues (WEF, Environment & Climate Change) (in cooperation with FAO, CEDARE, UN-Water, UNEP, etc.).
- 🗨️ Human, cultural, media dis/misinformation and mental health related topics (in cooperation with UNESCO/WHO).

#### Global WSIS process and Arab WSIS process

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. 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, UNDP 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 implementation of WSIS processes at the regional level since its 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 UN General Assembly (UNGA) resolution 70/125 created strong linkages between the WSIS process and the 2030 Agenda process. It requested a +20 review and mandated the CSTD 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 UNGA80 in September 2025.

### C. Seventh Arab Internet Governance Forum

**The Arab IGF segment will encompass several main plenary debate sessions, such as, but not limited to, the following:**

- 🗨️ 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 LAS, who serve 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 LAS 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, so as 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 five annual meetings, Kuwait 2012, attended by over 300 participants; Algiers 2013, attended by some 800 participants; Beirut (ESCWA) 2014, attended by over 500 participants; Beirut (Ogero) 2015, attended by 650 participants; Egypt 2020, attended by 150 participants; and hybrid in 2021 within the framework of DCDF 2021, attended by around 600 participants. The main output of these 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 ADA's implementation mechanisms.
- Potentially, an interim session of the UN regional commissions.

### E. Community engagement

In line with the inclusive and participatory nature of DCDF 2024, two open calls for submissions of session and workshop proposals will be sent to the main partners and key stakeholders soon.

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

All Arab WSIS stakeholders who would like to share their digital development experiences, or engage in discussions around Arab WSIS-related thematic work or policy pertaining to digital development and/or digital cooperation as a means towards implementing the 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, is encouraged to engage in workshops around the following five thematic areas, namely: global and regional Internet governance ecosystems; access and inclusiveness; legal, policy and regulatory framework; digital economy and digital transformation; and human, cultural and behavioral issues related to digital platforms. Proposals for special sessions could be submitted using the following online form: <https://forms.office.com/e/xtcTVcCDgJ>.

Based on the different inputs from the Arab WSIS and Arab IGF 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 the DCDF 2024



Second edition of the Arab International "Digital Cooperation and Development Forum" (DCDF 2024)				Intergovernmental Committee on Technology for Development	
Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6
High-Level Segments of the DCDF 2024					
Registration + Networking	Registration + Networking	Registration + Networking	Registration + Networking	Registration	Registration
Opening Ceremony of the 1 <sup>st</sup> High-Level Partners Conference (HLPC_1)	Opening of the 4 <sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Arab HL Forum on WSIS and 2030 Agenda (AHLF 4)			Opening of the 5th Session of ESCWA Intergovernmental Committee on Technology for Development	
					IGM Conclusion and Closing
	Opening of the 7 <sup>th</sup> Arab Internet Governance Forum (Arab IGF 7)				
			Conclusion and Closing Statements of DCDF 2024		
Closing Statements					

  

<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #f08080; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Opening or closing of events	<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #f0e68c; border: 1px solid black;"></span> High-Level Partners Conference on the ADA	<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #00b0f0; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Ministerial/Sub-Ministerial Roundtables	<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #90ee90; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Arab High-Level Forum on the WSIS	<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #add8e6; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Arab Internet Governance Forum	<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #808080; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Parallel Tracks / Other Events	<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #4682b4; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Committee on Technology for Development
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## Organization

- ESCWA and LAS plus partners are organizing DCDF 2024, over four days from 3-6 November 2024.
- DCDF 2024 is open to all stakeholders, who are welcome to join and lead on dedicated sessions to highlight their own work and achievements in the ICT for development field, and to contribute to and inform the event's core recommendations and outcomes.



## Participants and registration

- DCDF 2024 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/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 2024. Simultaneous interpretation between English and Arabic will be available.

## Additional information and correspondence

- A dedicated webpage will be made available on the web (<https://dcd2024.unescwa.org>), providing updated information on DCDF 2024. Further inquiries should be communicated to the person listed below.

### Mr. Ayman El-Sherbiny

Chief of ICT Policies, Digital Cooperation and Digital Development

United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)

UN House, Beirut Lebanon

Tel.: +961 1 978555

Fax: +961 1 981510/1/2

E-mail: [escwa-dcdf@un.org](mailto:escwa-dcdf@un.org)

Web site: [www.unescwa.org](http://www.unescwa.org)

## Endnotes

1. <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/21252030%20Agenda%20for%20Sustainable%20Development%20web.pdf>.
2. [https://www.un.org/en/content/digital-cooperation-roadmap/assets/pdf/Roadmap\\_for\\_Digital\\_Cooperation\\_EN.pdf](https://www.un.org/en/content/digital-cooperation-roadmap/assets/pdf/Roadmap_for_Digital_Cooperation_EN.pdf).
3. [https://www.un.org/en/content/common-agenda-report/assets/pdf/Common\\_Agenda\\_Report\\_English.pdf](https://www.un.org/en/content/common-agenda-report/assets/pdf/Common_Agenda_Report_English.pdf).
4. Towards a Digital Decade of Action – through Digital Cooperation and Development – in the Arab Region, 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. Third regional consultative meeting on Arab Digital Cooperation and Development – Consolidated Regional Policy Dialogue Platforms, online session as part of WSIS-2021, 27 April 2021.
7. The following five meetings of the Arab IGF have been held: First Arab IGF (2012) in Kuwait. Second Arab IGF (2013) in Algiers. Third Arab IGF (2014) in Beirut. Fourth Arab IGF (2015) in Beirut. Fifth Arab IGF (2020) in Cairo.
8. The following two AHLF meetings have been held: First AHLF on WSIS and 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Beirut, 8-12 May 2017, <https://www.unescwa.org/events/arab-high-level-forum-wsis-and-2030-agenda-sustainable-development>. Second AHLF on WSIS and 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Beirut, 19-21 March 2019, <https://archive.unescwa.org/events/arab-forum-wsis-sdgs-2019>.



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الأمم المتحدة الأونكتاد

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منظمة الأغذية والزراعة للأمم المتحدة



الاتحاد العربي للاقتصاد الرقمي ARAB FEDERATION FOR DIGITAL ECONOMY



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