

# “BEYOND TUNIS: Civil Society's Role in Transforming WSIS Action Plan into Reality”

The meeting started at 11:20am at the Heinrich Boll Foundation with Introduction by participants.

## Presentations

**Dr. Axel Sievers** introduced himself and the Henrich Boll Foundation. He talked about the HBF as being a part of the German green party. HBF has been interested in the knowledge society as a higher level of the Information society. Issues surrounding policy

and copyright issues are part of the knowledge society discussions which extends the boundary of the Information society. More on [www.boell.de](http://www.boell.de)

His presentation was on Strengthening the Nigerian civil Society. He mentioned issues that concerns funding the civil society. He reiterates the fact that as much as HBF is a small organization, it welcomes ideas and it's committed to strengthening the Nigerian Civil society. HBF also supports and encourages networking, discussions and existing ideas. HBF is particularly interested in working together with organizations in the area of policy formulation and development..

**Bankole Olubamise** of DevNet talked about the Nigerian Information society and why the drive has been slowed down by government bureaucracy. DevNet has tried to kick start the process from the civil society angle. Things have however slowed down due to in availability of funding. ECA eventually offered to sponsor the process. A draft was made and the development plan was broken down into sectors. Key individuals were contacted as consultants. Mr. John Dada of Fantsuam foundation was contacted to draft the civil society input of the development strategy. He suggested the break out session of the HBF meeting should look through the strategy and to suggest possible timelines towards achievable goals.

On a final note, he suggested enriching the document the government is taking to Tunis with activities from the Private sector and the civil society.

**Gbenga Sesan** started his presentation on “WSIS: Yesterday, today and tomorrow”

His presentation gave an overview of the WSIS process and the hopes we have after the process ends. He made a call to action to all the stakeholders involved.

After Gbenga's presentation, the floor was open for questions and contributions from participants. The following are the questions and suggestions raised by participants.

**Questions, Contributions, Issues raised.**

(Mayo) -> Is it possible to copy the ONE.org (send an email to your organization asking for 3rd world debt cancellation) model? [e.g. Child Helpline]

(Uncle Joe) -> Can we get WSIS Youth documents?

(Kola) -> More Action less Talk – MALT. Proposing the Digital Village model [embracing the Social Enterprise model over traditional grant-seeking]

(Tope Soremi) -> We can do better, but we have been acting!

(Ugo) -> What are we going to do about rural folks?

(Titi) -> How do youth ensure that their proposals are not "hijacked"?

(Oyebisi) -> We need to strengthen individual efforts by ensuring central coordination

(Tope) -> We need to consider post-WSIS challenges. Can we work without government? Language issues and online protest. NYIN or NYC-ICTs can coordinate post-WSIS efforts

(Axel) -> Focus on what level of work you wish to be involved with. The debates will help provide input into your everyday work. Networking and showcasing are obvious advantages of the process. We need to intervene on Nigeria's ICT Policy and Regulation [legal and policy issues of ICT development]. HBF supports critical but beneficial intervention of civil society with policy issues.

## **Focus Groups**

After these questions were discussed there was a breakout session, each group discussed possible steps to action after Tunis. The outcome of these breakout sessions was put together and it now forms a document of recommendation for after-Tunis activities.

Some focus group outcomes

:

- \* Language (local languages, "ICT-language" to "street-language")
- \* Central Coordination
- \* Democratic Participation (one letter-a-week to the national assembly)
- \* Practical implementation
- \* Attitude (moving from meeting-mindedness to process-mindedness)
- \* "Project Friday": Raising awareness on the issue of mob action, and the need to take action against the criminals
- \* Freedom of Information vs. Cyber crime a la Privacy (HBF is interested in this particular subject)

## **Post WSIS Recommendations**

## Group 1

1. Democracy sustenance through the ICTs. Through email advocacy. Cross fertilization of ideas.
2. Youth Organizations should create websites and concentrate on what can be done at the click of the mouse. There also a need to form an online network to coordinate ICT4D projects.
3. Volunteers should come together to develop local solutions to problems ICTs claim to solve.
4. People that members of ICT4D Networks should try to transfer contents in the local language.

## Group 2

5. Establishment of Private sector/civil society driven ICT research institute
6. Awareness on positive attitudes towards ICT activities.
7. The usage of short message services (SMS) in the propagation of Peace through ICT to reach more than a million Nigeria every month.
8. Introduction of Tele-centers in each local government in Nigeria
9. Translation of ICT terminologies into a language the average Nigeria youth (street youth) will understand.
10. ICT Applications to develop and monitor in other sectors like Health, Water, Agriculture and Electricity.
11. Encouragement of Project Continuity the is realistic, self sustaining and time bound

## Group 3

### Rural Folks

- ➔ Involvement of NGOs close to the area
- ➔ Language/Translation
- ➔ Proper |education and enlightenment of local chiefs
- ➔ Good policy and translation of the policy

### Central Coordination

- ➔ Good content/ clear strategy/ Good framework

### Getting Government to work with signed document

- ➔ Lobby and advocacy
- ➔ Consolidating the model
- ➔ Raising the consciousness of the people

### Practical Implementation

- ➔ Celebrating success stories
- ➔ Educational sector such as curriculum review, provision of infrastructure, providing opportunities/competition/intellectual challenges

## **Participants at the Meeting**

Gbenga Adeyemo  
Hauwa Umar  
Nwanneka Akabuike  
Rotimi Olawale  
Carolyn Nwaokolo  
Goodluck Obi  
Oyebisi Seyi  
Olusegun Olutayo  
Joe Olutuase  
Deolu Asaye  
Wunmi Braihmoh  
Tope Oketunji  
Bankole Olubamise  
Kola Osinowo  
Christie Iyoha  
Bunmi Idowu (Comet)  
Ayo Oladejo  
Ugochukwu Nwosu  
Rapeal Chukwujekwu  
Pascal Smith  
Edward Popoola  
Titi Akinsanmi  
Tope Soremi  
'Gbenga Sesan

By

Edward Popoola

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