



**WSIS
FORUM 2026**

**6-10 July 2026
Geneva, Switzerland**

Session Outcome Document

Action Line C6: Enabling Environment

Benchmarking for Better Digital Policies

Organized by ITU, Regulatory and Market Environment Division

Tuesday 7 July 2026 (10:00-10:45)

<https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2026/Agenda/Session/295>

Moderator: Ms. Carmen Prado Wagner, Senior Programme Officer, ITU/BDT
Opening Remarks: Dr. Cosmas Luckyson Zavazava, Director, ITU Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT)
Keynote Presentation: Ms. Youlia Lozanova, Senior Programme Officer, ITU/BDT
Panelists: Ms. Ekaterine Imedadze (COMCOM/EaPeReg), Ms. Andrea Grippa (ANATEL, Brazil), Ms. Lara El Khateeb (TRC, Jordan), Ms. Emilia Nghikembua (CRAN, Namibia), Mr. Javier Gutierrez (CRC, Colombia).

The session highlighted the importance of benchmarking as a practical tool for strengthening digital governance, supporting regulatory modernization, and enabling informed policy decisions. Participants emphasized that benchmarking helps countries identify gaps, prioritize reforms, monitor progress, and strengthen accountability. Combined with tools such as the [ITU Digital Readiness Framework](#) and collaborative platforms such as the [Digital Regulation Network \(DRN\)](#), benchmarking can help transform data into action, facilitate institutional learning, and advance inclusive, resilient, and sustainable digital transformation in support of the WSIS vision for 2035.

Key Issues Discussed

- Participants agreed that benchmarking is most effective when used as a tool for evidence-based decision-making, reform prioritization, and continuous policy improvement rather than as a mechanism for comparing rankings.
- The ITU Digital Readiness Framework was recognized as a valuable instrument to support countries in identifying strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for policy and regulatory reform.
- Regional and international cooperation were identified as essential enablers for translating benchmarking data into actionable policy measures.
- Panelists highlighted the importance of combining benchmarking results with stakeholder dialogue, institutional capacity building, and peer learning to maximize policy impact.
- The discussion underscored that benchmarking helps move policy discussions from perceptions to evidence, allowing governments to identify priorities based on measurable outcomes rather than assumptions.
- Speakers agreed that benchmarking can play an important role in supporting the transition toward collaborative and whole-of-government approaches to digital governance,

particularly in emerging areas such as artificial intelligence, data governance, cybersecurity, and digital infrastructure.

Key Outcomes of the session

- ITU showcased the **Digital Readiness Framework** as part of its broader efforts to support countries in assessing and strengthening digital governance readiness.
- The session highlighted the continued role of the **Digital Regulation Network (DRN)** as a platform for cooperation among regional regulatory associations and their members worldwide.
- ITU introduced the [Global Economic Model Study \(GEMS\) Tool](#), an evidence-based platform that helps countries assess the socio-economic impact of digital infrastructure investments and policy options. The tool supports informed decision-making by providing data-driven insights to strengthen digital policy planning, investment strategies, and sustainable digital transformation.
- Participants expressed strong support for continued collaboration through regional regulatory associations and the ITU Digital Regulation Network.
- Speakers reaffirmed the importance of sharing regulatory experiences, lessons learned, and best practices through peer networks and ITU-led initiatives.
- The session reinforced the commitment among regulators and policy-makers to strengthen evidence-based approaches to digital governance and reform.

Key Recommendations and Forward-Looking Actions

- Promote the use of benchmarking as a diagnostic and governance tool rather than a ranking exercise, ensuring that benchmarking results are systematically linked to regulatory reform roadmaps, institutional learning, and continuous monitoring of outcomes.
- Strengthen analytical and institutional capacities within governments and regulatory authorities to improve the interpretation and practical use of benchmarking evidence.
- Expand cooperation through regional regulatory associations and the ITU Digital Regulation Network (DRN) to facilitate peer learning, exchange of best practices, and collaborative problem-solving.
- Use benchmarking results as a basis for multi-stakeholder dialogue involving regulators, ministries, industry, academia, and development partners to support coordinated digital policy reforms.
- Leverage benchmarking and digital governance frameworks to strengthen resilience and preparedness, ensuring that digital infrastructure and regulatory capabilities can contribute effectively to the sustainable development objectives as WSIS advances toward 2035.