

WORLD SUMMIT ON THE INFORMATION SOCIETY

A New Zealand Workshop in preparation for the Second Summit

Sponsored by UNESCO
Hosted by National Library
Facilitated by 2020 Communications Trust

Prepared by Ian Thomson/2020 Trust
May 2004

Table of Contents

| | |
|---|---|
| Report on WSIS2 Workshop held on May 28th..... | 3 |
| Goal of the workshop..... | 3 |
| Agenda..... | 3 |
| Attendance..... | 3 |
| Notes of the Workshop..... | 3 |
| Opening and Introductions..... | 3 |
| Address by Mr Axel Plathe, UNESCO..... | 4 |
| Developing New Zealand's Information Society..... | 4 |
| Panel Session..... | 5 |
| Discussion..... | 6 |
| Summary..... | 6 |
| Themes..... | 6 |
| Recommendations..... | 7 |
| Actions..... | 7 |
| Conclusions..... | 8 |
| Appendix 1. Attendees..... | 9 |

Report on WSIS2 Workshop held on May 28th.

The 2020 Trust facilitated a workshop between UNESCO, various Government agencies and New Zealand Civil Society with the aim of developing a common approach to the forthcoming second round of the World Summit on the Information Society to be held in Tunis 2005. The workshop was hosted by the National Library and funded by UNESCO

Goal of the workshop

To update knowledge on current issues and directions for WSIS 2
To share views on issues, possible outcomes and activities for the second summit
To develop goals and an action plan for New Zealand's contribution to and participation in the next phase of the WSIS.

Agenda

| | |
|---------------|---|
| 9.30 | Arrival and coffee |
| 10.00 – 10.15 | Welcome by Penny Carnaby |
| 10.15 - 11.15 | UNESCO - Intro – L Zwimpfer – Address by Axel Plathe |
| 11.15 - 12.15 | Building NZ's Information Society – Diane Wyber and Brad Ward on the new Digital Strategy |
| 12.15 – 1.00 | Lunch |
| 1.00 – 1.30 | Panel session – Key issues for NZ W Roberts, F March, I Thomson |
| 1.30 – 2.30 | General discussion – top 5 issues |
| 2.30 – 3.00 | Coffee |
| 3.00 – 4.00 | Goals, action plans and wrap up. |

Attendance

Approximately 25 people attended, with apologies from 10 others
(See Appendix 1. for a list of attendees and apologies)

Notes of the Workshop

Opening and Introductions

The Chief Executive of the National Library, Penny Carnaby opened the workshop by highlighting the importance of the Democratisation of Information and commented that the National Library saw its leading role in the Information Society as a natural fit. She also noted that the new budget had just allocated an additional \$24M to the

library to develop a secure repository (Trusted Digital Repository) for New Zealand's digital heritage and archives.

She commended the commitment of those attending and was looking for positive results.

Laurence Zwimpfer supported Penny's opening remarks and added that UNESCO is a key player in the WSIS process and commented that of the 150 actions points in the WSIS Action Plan, UNESCO saw they had responsibilities for at least 75 and so had a strong commitment to the WSIS outcomes.

UNESCO is running a global program called Information for All People (IFAP) and its core thrust is to develop an inclusive information literate world. Laurence had recently returned from UNESCO meetings in Paris to develop this program. UNESCO meetings in Wellington this week had also addressed the development of Knowledge Societies into Creative Societies and had looked at planning beyond the WSIS final summit in 2005.

Laurence saw that UNESCO had a role to stimulate Civil Society's involvement in WSIS and to work with NGO's. He is particularly looking for actions to take to the Government for inclusion in their WSIS involvement.

Address by Mr Axel Plathe, UNESCO

Mr Axel Plathe addressed the Workshop through a slide show on the Global UNESCO perspective of WSIS. He developed the four principles for Knowledge Societies as

1. Freedom of Expression
2. Universal Access to Information and Knowledge
3. Cultural and Linguistic Diversity
4. Quality Education for All.

Axel presented UNESCO's WSIS Action Plan based on its areas of competence of sciences, cultural and linguistic diversity and local content, access to information and knowledge and media. UNESCO is planning around defined concrete actions, sharing of lessons learned and good practices and development of strategic alliances.

He concluded by commenting that Creative/Knowledge Societies will not stop after the summit in Tunis and that UNESCO was already developing plans to carry on the good work.

Axel concluded by suggesting that delegates follow WSIS issues and actions on the UNESCO WSIS web site at

http://portal.unesco.org/ci/ev.php?URL_ID=1543&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201&PHPSESSID=11308eedd21140a0170e8ee437945e0e

Developing New Zealand's Information Society

Diane Wyber introduced the topic of Developing New Zealand's Information Society through facilitating creativity in society and industry and said a "Trusted Digital Repository" must underpin this work. The long-term management of digital material that is authentic and safe is essential for a successful Information Society.

She commented that the National Library is moving into a new phase of information storage and links to other global repositories and this will form an essential part of our national identity, heritage and culture. Diane mentioned that the National Library has

an increasing involvement in e-learning, based on the content they are developing and currently own.

Reg Hammond and Brad Ward presented the formation of the Government's new Digital Strategy. This work follows on from the ICT task Force work and other ICT actions the Government has taken and is being approached as a whole of Government, whole of society process. The document is not so much about technology; it is about people using it. It seeks to identify and promote the necessary conditions to realise the full benefits of the technology.

An interesting theme developed in the workshop about what needs to be done to get more benefit from the technology, rather than how to get access, what technologies and how fast. It is more about effective use than access to computers and the Internet.

23 government agencies have co-operated to produce the strategy with support by Local Government NZ through the e-local government-working group.

It will cover the goals already agreed such as Probe, new initiative announced in the recent budget such as NGI and directions and ideas for the next 5 years.

The government is seeking general input on the last phase and plans to put these into the future budget rounds.

They will publish three documents in June, a full strategy proposal, a light version of the same and a feedback section with a series of questions.

The strategy has three main themes of development of content, confidence and capability and connection. It also identifies the benefits in Communities, Business and Government.

It was noted that the documents do reflect the principles of WSIS and acknowledge it as an internal frame of reference.

The consultation phase will begin on 15th June and close on 16th August with the final document going to cabinet prior to the beginning of the budget round late this year.

Panel Session

A Panel Session was convened after lunch, consisting of Frank March (Ministry of Economic Development), Winston Peters (National Library) and Ian Thomson (Workshop convener).

Three main themes were discussed and agreed at the Panel Session

- Firstly that New Zealand should take the WSIS principles and Actions and develop a way forward for New Zealand and its neighbours in harmony with these, accommodating our unique heritage, our place in the global stage and our vision of the future
- That New Zealand should continue to play a leading role in WSIS and should take on a regional role, with a strong focus on indigenous and SIDS issues. Consultation with Civil Society, Iwi and Industry should be strengthened.
- New Zealand should promote its advanced Information Society capabilities, especially at the final summit at Tunis.

Discussion

Each delegate was encouraged to comment on their issues or views on WSIS and New Zealand's Information Society.

The following issues were discussed and agreed

- That we have a good range of leading local initiatives developing their own micro Information Societies and we should learn from and promote these
- That New Zealand is quite advanced in our indigenous and Pacific Island ICT cultural and linguistic diversity and that we should capitalise on these to help other less advanced nations
- An area the we are not at best practice is the understanding of the role ICTs can have in developing social capital and developing enterprising communities and a thriving third sector (Volunteers, NFPs etc). The issue is preserving and developing the "connectedness of people"
- That NZ libraries are quite advanced in promoting and developing the Information Society through breaking down barriers and encouraging the development of local content and that this role should be strengthened and promoted. The National Library's role as trusted digital repository is very important.
- That New Zealand has done some very innovative and highly regarded research on the Information Society and this should be strengthened and promoted.
- The Ministry Of Education has some very advanced and innovative ICT initiatives and should be used as an example for other agencies, both local and overseas.
- All agreed that it is time to move on from discussing technology and even access in isolation. Key issues were developing effective use (capacity) and developing appropriate local content. Many uses today do not need high speed and still promote the development of a powerful Information Society. Management of (a plethora of) information is a new skill and must be promoted, noting that just as information is empowering, too much is disempowering.

Summary

During the above discussions, a number of common themes, recommendations and actions became obvious. These were recorded and are presented below.

Themes

1. **Connectedness.** Developing or extending personal relationships, social networking and social capital building were considered by all to be more important than focussing on technology, speeds and access. This theme should include non-PC and non-Internet technologies, especially amongst the young, as they are the first to use new devices.
2. **Content.** This broad area covers issues such as locally relevant content, developing trusted repositories (meta data and authentication), preservation of content and the interactions around it and the area of promoting new media. It

should also include Public Domain Information and the role of Libraries, not only as storers of Information, but also as promoters of the creation of local content.

3. **Information Literacy.** The Information Society requires new Information Literacy skills and capacity building which is more than teaching how to drive a PC or send an email. A stronger focus is needed on creating information and turning data into information and knowledge, rather than passively consuming information. The issue is the development of people skills to participate in the Information Society

Recommendations

The following issues were recommended for further action

1. **Indigenous people, an area for leadership.** New Zealand seems to be ahead in its work in developing an indigenous Information Society and could use this to help other countries. Issues will include consultation with Maori and Pacific Islanders and cooperation with other countries such as Canada and Australia.
2. **Small Island Developing States (SIDS).** Helping our neighbours in the development of their own Information Societies was a key outcome for the workshop. Issues will include raising awareness of ICT as a development tool, e.g. within NZAID and Foreign Affairs and also throughout the region. Linking developments between Pacific Island communities in NZ and their home countries would be a good start.
3. **Community and Voluntary sectors.** These sectors require considerable support in capacity building and developing sustaining use of ICTs for social and economic development.
4. **Libraries as centres of Information Access and Content publishing.** Libraries could take a more complete role in the generation, storage, archiving, authentication and accessibility of digital content in the Information Society. NZ libraries are quite advanced in their development of these issues and could promoted as leaders in this field.
5. **That the developments in the above four areas be showcased in the final WSIS at Tunis.** Issues will include advance planning and co-ordination, funding, logistics and representation. A special tripartite group could be set up to manage this.

Actions

A number of possible actions were suggested in the workshop and these have been recorded for later evaluation and prioritization

1. The study of people who are highly motivated to use ICTs, e.g. disabled people and high end users, to learn how others can more effectively use them.
2. Look at the use of e games to enhance learning outcomes. Interactive multi media is a powerful learning medium
3. Need to develop skills to determine when there is just enough information. Too much information is disempowering.
4. Cooperation with Canadians in indigenous ICT leadership
5. Must seek endorsement from Maori on international leadership role
6. TUANZ to incorporate WSIS principles and players in their next ICT Applications Workshop.
7. Develop a mechanism for sharing ideas and initiatives

8. Develop public/private partnerships for ICT initiatives
9. Promote the development of Digital Story Telling skills
10. Promote the development of national programs for projects like Computers in Homes, Living Heritage etc.
11. Support the development of a local media portal.
12. Investigate the use of personal networking programs like Ryze and Ecademy

Conclusions

The author of this report was impressed by the commitment and understanding of WSIS issues and developments. There seems to be much more interest than for the first summit.

This may be linked to the Government's Digital Strategy work (or is it the other way around?). Anyway, there appears to be a stronger desire to become actively involved in the development of New Zealand's Information Society and to engage in the global community on this issue. It was particularly heartening to hear repeated calls for consultation with, and involvement by, Civil Society.

The co-incidence of the new Digital Strategy and WSIS makes a very strong platform to undertake ambitious initiatives in the development of our Information Society.

Appendix 1. Attendees

| | |
|-------------------|----------------------------|
| Penny Carnaby | National Library |
| Laurence Zwimpfer | UNESCO |
| Ellen Strickland | UNESCO |
| Axel Plathe | UNESCO |
| Winston Roberts | National Library |
| Diane Wyber | National Library |
| John Mohi | National Library |
| Frank March | MED |
| Jan Symington | CEG/DOL |
| Jan Rivers | LGNZ |
| Laura Sommer | SSC – e Govt |
| Douglas Harre | MOE |
| Ernie Newman | TUANZ |
| John Cable | Archives NZ |
| Craig Cherie | Hutt City Library/LIANZA |
| Celia WadeBrown | Wellington City Councillor |
| Justine Kemp | DevZone |
| Barbara Craig | Victoria University |
| Tina Tuiono | CWA/TKI |
| Richard Katipa | CyberWaka |
| Col Heke | South Waikato |
| John Veitch | Christchurch |
| Reg Hammond | MED |
| Brad Ward | MED |
| Apologies | |
| Paul Reynolds | LIAC |
| Karl DuFresne | LIAC |
| Ainslie Dewe | LIAC |
| Liz Butterworth | Internet Safety Group |
| Ingrid Volkmer | Otago University |
| Stephen Lulich | LIANZA |
| Charlotte Frater | MFAT |
| Stephen Bell | Wellington |
| Robin Hunt | Wellington |
| Andy Williamson | Auckland |