GLOBAL INFORMATION SOCIETY WATCH 2024
SPECIAL EDITION

WSIS+20: Reimagining horizons of dignity, equity and justice for our digital future

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Points on digital justice

Alan Finlay

"Digital justice" is a comparatively recent term to be used by rights activists, although at least some of what it signifies were already concerns for ICT-for-development organisations in the mid-1990s. It seeks to build collective action and a common analytical framework for organisations working in different fields and at different levels in order to respond to the rapid, intersecting changes that are the result of digitalisation and datafication, and the significant power imbalances that have become evident in the process.[1] It is a form of movement building, and positions itself alongside and in dialogue with activists working towards "environmental justice", "climate justice", "food justice", "gender justice" and "economic justice" – as well as "data justice" (which seems to have come into prominent use after the Snowden revelations in 2013) and "technology justice" (for some digital justice is considered a sub-set of technology justice) – among other articulations of how systemic injustices impact on those in the Majority World.

However, this is only one view of "digital justice".

This report offers an overview of some uses of the term, including two used by global institutions and corporations which are different to the meanings intended by advocacy organisations. It then offers several tentative "points on digital justice" – perspectives that seem important for civil society organisations to address in any conception of what digital justice may be. These draw on discussions at a recent meeting co-organised by the Global Digital Justice Forum, IT for Change, Third World Network and APC.

What is digital justice?

Despite its relatively short life span, and perhaps because of its short life span, there have been several different attempts to define what "digital justice" might mean. One of these definitions is the outcome of community consultations with equity experts and networks by the smart city programme in Portland in the United States (US). This follows efforts in 2020 to ban the use of facial recognition technologies in the city because of discrimination,[2] which also resulted in "digital justice" being foregrounded in the city's work as "a strategy to incorporate anti-racism and social justice into [its] priorities, policies, programs and plans."

With both surveillance and open data[3] being important components of the smart city programme, it defines digital justice as:

> [T]he equitable treatment of all people in [the context of] technology and information, regardless of race, abilities, gender, age, personal circumstances or social context. Digital justice ensures that people have the digital rights and resources they need to thrive – including access to digital infrastructure, shared ownership of digital resources, data protection, and open and accountable digital governance.[4]

It then discusses data rights and data accessibility and concludes that:

> Digital Justice must be an instrument of individual and collective empowerment, as well as the conduct for building equitable wealth, inclusion and governance relationships with transparency and accountability, [in a way that does] not marginalize or increase

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1   See the introduction to this edition of GISWatch, where some of these changes from a digital and internet rights perspective are discussed.

2   Smart City PDX. (2020) *Digital Justice definition: Report*. City of Portland. https://www.portland.gov/bps/smart-city-pdx/surveillance-policy/documents/digital-justice-definition/download

3   https://www.portland.gov/bps/smart-city-pdx

4   https://survey123.arcgis.com/share/01b63ccceb5c4715a8e3b1ba7cb7bec9

disparities impacting BIPOC [Black, Indigenous and people of colour] communities and people with disabilities.

In this definition, as in others discussed below, the concern with "digital rights and resources", the "shared ownership" of these resources, "collective empowerment", equality and transparent and accountable governance are all ideas anchored in the historical human rights struggles of digital and internet rights organisations.

Also in the US, the Detroit Digital Justice Coalition has developed a definition of digital justice[5] through interviews with its coalition members who use "media and technology for community organizing or grassroots economic development." Although the interviews focused on a "vision for 'digital justice' in Detroit", the principles are general enough to be applicable in other contexts, and were seen as a useful articulation in the context of the Black Lives Matter protests in the US in 2020.[6]

The principles are grouped into four areas: access, participation, common ownership and healthy communities. The first emphasises "equal access to media and technology" as "producers as well as consumers", and valuing "different languages, dialects and forms of communication". The principle of participation "prioritizes the participation of people who have been traditionally excluded from and attacked by media and technology" and "[demystifying] technology to the point where we can not only use it, but create our own technologies and participate in the decisions that will shape communications infrastructure." "Common ownership" encourages technologies that are "free and shared openly with the public" and "promotes diverse business models for the control and distribution of information, including: cooperative business models and municipal ownership." And "healthy communities" focuses on community organising, the environment, community-based economic development by "expanding technology access for small businesses, independent artists and other entrepreneurs," and education.

While neither appears to make claims for their definitions of digital justice outside of their sphere of activity (geographically the cities of Portland and Detroit), many aspects of these definitions are clearly applicable elsewhere, such as participation,

open and transparent governance, collective ownership of resources, and valuing and supporting diversity, among others. Ideas around the appropriation of technology are also strong in the Detroit Coalition's definition, and both definitions emphasise the "demystifying" of technology, in the case of the Portland definition, with respect to data.

Nevertheless, one might still want to call them narrower definitions of what digital justice is or could be. Particularly when it comes to the Detroit Coalition's principles, there may also be moments of ideological assumption that others might wish to contest, such as considering "independent artists" to be entrepreneurs, which is a specific conception of the role and function of an artist in capitalist society, or when members of the community are described as "producers and consumers" (i.e. in some conceptions of "meaningful connectivity" at the local level, it is precisely this expectation that is challenged – that internet users should be "consumers" in any way in the market sense).[7] While their principle on the environment states that "digital justice promotes alternative energy, recycling and salvaging technology, and using technology to promote environmental solutions," some may find this insufficient in addressing important considerations for environmental justice in the context of digital technologies, including campaigning against the marginalisation of communities impacted by the mining of scarce minerals used in technology, insisting on transparency in the sourcing of materials by producers, and even campaigning for labour rights in digital production. In both definitions, there is the potential for collaboration with local or municipal government in the forms of civic engagement envisaged; by implication through the Portland government consulting the community on the idea of digital justice, or in the Detroit Coalition's definition of promoting "diverse business models for the control and distribution of information, including: cooperative business models and municipal ownership." In this respect, digital justice includes a component of civic-to-government engagement, even civic co-management of public infrastructures, and is collaborative in its engagement with at least some institutions of power.

The World Association for Christian Communication (WACC) has produced a "study and

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5   https://www.detroitdjc.org/principles
6   Sapara-Grant, A. (2020, 8 September). Defining Digital Justice. *DAI*. https://dai-global-digital.com/defining-digital-justice.html

7   See the report on meaningful connectivity by APC and Rhizomatica in this edition of GISWatch.

action guide" for digital justice[8] that "offers insights and ideas for bringing about ecological and social justice, human rights, and democracy wherever digital communication touches our lives." Its understanding of digital justice is rooted in a social justice and communications rights perspective (it refers to the former as a "sacred value") and aligned with other global campaigns for justice in different fields of activity: "Digital justice requires, at the same time, gender justice, climate justice, economic justice, racial justice, and so much more."

WACC builds its discussion of digital justice in five broad areas: human and civil rights (which are seen to provide a framework for action for digital justice); communication rights; inclusion and participation; critiquing and resisting power; and building a transformative movement in alliance with those working on "social and ecological justice", thereby foregrounding the cross-field movement-building dynamic of an expanded understanding of what digital justice entails. The WACC definition more explicitly calls out the power of global corporations ("This power serves profit and seeks to control people, leading to the exploitation of humanity and the earth"), including their impact on the environment ("Mining for components, the manufacture of devices, planned obsolescence, and tech waste devastate ecosystems"). Something of this challenge to the exploitative business models of tech corporations can also be read in the Detroit Coalition's definition through its call for technology to be "demystified" and appropriated and even created by communities ("Digital justice demystifies technology to the point where we can not only use it, but create our own technologies").

The Global Digital Justice Forum[9] is a "multisectoral group of development organizations, digital rights networks, trade unions, feminist groups, corporate watchdogs, and communication rights campaigners", and includes organisations based in or working in the global South such as IT for Change, ETC Group, Third World Network, Oxfam International, Social Watch, Public Services International, Open Knowledge Foundation, Latin American Information Agency (ALAI) and Just Net Coalition. It has defined its advocacy for "practical action" in several areas which can be summarised as: democratising governance; decentralising digital systems; promoting the internet as a global commons, emphasising among other things the sustainability of local economies and democratic participation; taking on what it calls "corporate impunity" (in its submission to the Global Digital Compact it "rejects the 'multistakeholder model' that has dominated digital cooperation processes, leading to an entrenchment of corporate power");[10] promoting people-led technology models that are rooted in "development sovereignty" and are "ecologically responsible, non-extractive, rights-enabling and gender-just"; and developing legal and policy frameworks "grounded in human rights and economic justice" for data, artificial intelligence (AI) and platforms across different fields of activity.

IT for Change has also worked with DAWN, a "network of feminist scholars, researchers and activists from the economic South working for economic and gender justice and sustainable and democratic development",[11] to recently develop a Declaration of Feminist Digital Justice[12] which emphases the values of individual and collective agency; an ethics of solidarity; community-based participatory democracy; a fair and equitable global economic order; and what it calls a "global digital constitutionalism", which is "based on a reinvigorated, bottom-up and networked multilateralism for humane governance, enduring peace, thriving reciprocity and universal human rights." It has an "anti-capitalist" agenda in so far as it rejects "surveillance capitalism" and the "relentless commodification of our intimate lives", and like the Global Digital Justice Forum it critiques the "digital governance status quo, propped up by self-serving, corporate-controlled discourses of multistakeholderism."[13]

Both these definitions are also clear in their challenge to the corporate domination of digital technologies and governance models that enable this dominance. Instead, as the Global Digital Justice Forum puts it:

> The voices of marginalized communities should guide the processes leading to digital justice. To this end, we advocate for a democratized and meaningful form of participation that enables agile, accountable, and people- and planet-centric policies.[14]

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8   Green, E. (2022). *Digital Justice: A Study and Action Guide.* World Association for Christian Communication & World Council of Churches. https://waccglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Digital-Justice-DIGITAL-compressed.pdf

9   https://globaldigitaljusticeforum.net

10 Global Digital Justice Forum. (2023). *Submission of inputs for the Global Digital Compact.* f1a5177a-afb8-4c40-afe7-d6fb2454419b_GDC-submission_Global-Digital-Justice-Forum_2_.pdf (pop-umbrella.s3.amazonaws.com)

11 https://www.dawnfeminist.org/about-us

12 https://feministdigitaljustice.net

13 Ibid.

14 https://globaldigitaljusticeforum.net/about

What these cursory accounts of different definitions of digital justice show is that within civil society there are narrower and more expansive definitions of what it might entail, and perhaps even contestation between some definitions in terms of their implied analysis of power and the global economic status quo. In the case of the Portland smart city programme, with its particular interest in surveillance technologies and open data, there was an effort to determine how digital justice should be defined so that it could "become a core value in future policies and work on information and technology" in the city,[15] an institutionalisation of the term which some may consider disabling of its potential agency and effect. This is not necessarily a problem, at least in so far as any different interpretations and contradictions are surfaced and acknowledged. It may be, for instance, that the value of the term "digital justice" lies exactly in its resistance to a precise definition, and although it can provide an analytical framework for collective action, it acts as a vehicle for practical action in specific contexts, allowing for different emphases depending on the context in which it is applied.

What may be more problematic is the use of the same term by global institutions and corporations, but with quite different meanings. There are at least two meanings in use: the first refers to the digitalisation of judicial processes to improve the efficiency and transparency of the justice sector, as well as access to justice,[16] also sometimes referred to as "e-justice" (used in this way by the UN, and by corporations such as Microsoft); and the second, as discussed by the World Economic Forum (WEF) in 2021 in a white paper,[17] concerns itself with providing better judicial remedies for those who are victims of the harms caused by data-driven technologies. Among other things, it considers "key failures in global legal and judicial systems with regard to digital justice issues" and recommends "pathways to digital justice that lawmakers can develop to better protect individuals and communities." In its paper, digital injustice is seen as: "a matter of corrective justice, which is a way to attain redress for past actions." In particular, it adds, "corrective justice is ideal for resolving the types of unpredictable harm that tend to come from data-driven and predictive technologies."

The second definition may be an important part of a civil society conception of "digital justice", but both are very much narrower conceptualisations of the term, given they are confined to judicial processes and remedy. These articulations, however, are potentially concerning from an advocacy perspective, and place the onus on civil society organisations to be clear about what their definition of digital justice is when engaging in forums, and to be aware that when claims to digital justice are made, there is a risk that these might be misunderstood by other stakeholders, including governments.

Digital justice and global change: Some high-level considerations

Digital justice was discussed at a recent meeting co-organised by the Global Digital Justice Forum, IT for Change, Third World Network and APC. Activists from diverse fields participated in the meeting, including those working on food security, climate justice, labour rights, intellectual property (IP) law, community access networks, and digital rights. The aim of the meeting was to identify areas of common and cross-cutting concern in order to develop an agenda for collective action. Important forums where activists needed to engage on issues to do with digital justice were also identified. While the best practical advocacy approaches and areas for intervention are still being determined and refined,[18] several points about digital justice emerged during the meeting which offer a useful starting point for others who want to develop their own approach to digital justice.

Digital justice offers a historical analysis

History is a site of struggle and is constantly reframed and reinterpreted. Vigilance is required by digital justice activists so that history is not told or retold with important omissions, and used to define and frame the present with these omissions intact. Attempts to de-link the present from the past need to be challenged. For example, the origins of the development of internet infrastructure in the global South needs to inform global narratives of the development of the internet; how WSIS emerged, was negotiated, and civil society positions in 2003 need to inform the WSIS +20 process, including, for instance, the original meaning and intention of inclusive notions of multistakeholder engagement; myths that current innovations in technology, such

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15 Smart City PDX. (2021, 28 January). What does digital justice mean in Portland? https://www.portland.gov/bps/smart-city-pdx/news/2021/1/28/what-does-digital-justice-mean-portland

16 https://www.undp.org/rolhr/justice/digitalization-and-e-justice

17 World Economic Forum. (2021). *Pathways to Digital Justice: White paper.* https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_Pathways_to_Digital_Justice_2021.pdf

18 This report respects the request for anonymity made at the meeting.

as AI, mean that we are entering a totally new world with no reference to the past also need to be challenged. With respect to digital rights, many historical struggles and debates of the ICT-for-development and internet rights community, as well as the communications rights movement, need to be resurfaced in the present to inform and contextualise governance deliberations. The same historical considerations are necessary to account for the current geopolitical and economic status quo.

Digital justice anchors itself in economic, social and cultural rights

This is a necessary emphasis, a rebalancing. It doesn't mean digital justice ignores civil and political rights, which are equally core, but that digital justice insists that human rights are indivisible and interdependent and that analysis of the challenges and the solutions take all human rights into consideration. The danger is that without this emphasis, a narrower band of rights are focused on, such as privacy, freedom of expression and security, which are often the terrain of "digital rights", leading some organisations to prefer to identify their advocacy with "internet rights", which offers a more grounded account of rights, including a concern with enabling grassroots internet access and the socioeconomic and cultural implications of this access.

Digital justice is about people

Justice is about people, and digital justice is about the direct or indirect impact of technologies on people. Digital justice recentres the claim of ordinary people over technologies, rather than technologies over people. The usefulness of digital technologies needs to be defined by people, who are situated in specific contexts, not according to the needs of corporations and governments. The rights-based claims of people exist and are foregrounded ahead of the claims of corporations and governments, the latter of whom nevertheless have a duty to manage and implement programmes to realise or enable these rights. This inverts the current paradigm where technologies are imposed on people by corporations and governments without consent. Digital justice is therefore about participatory governance in practice.

Digital justice is about the environment

Digital justice means being aware (and doing something about) the impact of technologies on the environment that we depend on to survive.

This includes how minerals for the production of technology are sourced, and how technology is produced, used and disposed of in ways that pollute and deplete the Earth's natural resources, and displace and endanger local communities.

Digital justice offers an analysis of power

If justice is about people, governance is about power.[19] In its historical analysis, digital justice accounts for the status quo in terms of the power of corporations, governments, institutions and people. It situates this analysis within an understanding of the global economic order, and the ramifications of this at the regional, national and local level. It identifies systemic levers that keep unjust power structures intact – whether in institutions, processes, multilateral arrangements such as trade deals, laws, etc. – to focus its advocacy efforts for change.

Digital justice contests and reclaims language, and where necessary reframes dominant paradigms laid down by the powerful

Language by its very nature is a site of contestation and evolution and a struggle for power. Digital justice analyses this contestation and where necessary reclaims and reinvigorates radical meaning for language and terms. It pushes back against the dominant myths created through market capitalism and by governments, and resists attempts to whitewash the historical resonance of definitions and understandings that dilute their significance in policy documents, agreements and governance discussions. An example of this is the word "development", which has in many contexts been washed of the proactive, rights-affirming obligation it imposes on governments. The Declaration of Feminist Digital Justice reclaims the word through referring to the "right to development", and states that "the inalienable right of all peoples to full sovereignty over their natural wealth, enshrined in the United Nations Declaration on the Right to Development, should extend to their data resources."[20] Another example is "multistakeholder", which has in many instances been washed of the spirit of its original commitment.

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19 A direct quote from one of the participants at the workshop.
20 https://feministdigitaljustice.net

Digital justice is about the fair redistribution of global resources

Digital justice analyses and responds to the political economy. It seeks a much more equal share of local and global resources for the powerless, including technological resources and capital. One expression of this might be understanding digital technologies as global digital public goods,[21] and regulating them in this way. Another might look for significant taxation of rich tech corporations and the redistribution of this money to affected communities and in the public interest. Some might state the case more strongly: that digital justice is anti-capitalist. Whatever the model of economic justice preferred, or the ways to achieve economic justice are determined, digital justice seeks a rebalancing of economic power and agency, beyond token gestures of institutional reform, piecemeal trade concessions, or blind faith in the "trickle-down" effect.

Digital justice is advocacy distributed

Digitalisation and datafication across all or most fields of activity and the intensity and pace of these digitally driven changes, which are often unregulated and rights-infringing, means that civil society organisations from across different fields need to work together towards similar advocacy goals. This is necessary given the multiplicity of forums where digital issues and rights are discussed, often in a fragmented and uncoordinated way; the specialisations and networks required to be effective in these forums; and the capacity, including historical experience, to influence these forums. To be effective, a digital justice agenda means building bridges across fields that may be well outside the usual terrain of digital rights activists, as well as between the grassroots, the local, the national, the regional and the global levels.

Digital justice is not without its ironies, potential contradictions and internal conflicts

The idea of "digital justice" is likely to be messy, with points of confusion, misalignment and contradiction, and perhaps even contested within civil society itself. As one participant at the meeting put it, the idea of "climate justice" took years to concretise into a common advocacy agenda and can still be applied and understood differently by different constituencies and actors. More worrying would be a situation where no ironies, grey areas, contradictions and contestations existed. Digital justice is about finding our way out of the current status quo, so that a better world becomes possible. The map may not always be crystal clear. Because it responds to rapid change, the meaning of digital justice is perhaps necessarily unsettled.

Conclusion

"Digital justice", as used in this report, has been specifically and generally defined by civil society groups with advocacy concerns in the global North and in the global South, and in at least one instance by a local government. There are common elements in these definitions, such as the distribution of resources and ownership of infrastructures, participatory governance, transparency, and of course an emphasis on digital technologies; although, with respect to the latter, while some focus on "information and technologies" or "media and technologies", others take a much broader field of concern with respect to what "the digital" entails. For instance, at the meeting organised by the Global Digital Justice Forum, IT for Change, Third World Network and APC, geoengineering, agtech[22] and its impact on local farmers and food security, AI in war, and even the pollution of outer space from dead satellites and other debris were amongst what we should think about when discussing "digital justice".

By implication, "digital justice" is aligned with collective global advocacy causes such as "climate justice", "environmental justice", "economic justice" and "food justice", and, at their root, "social justice", which all have their own history of deliberation, contestation and accrued meanings in their respective fields of activism. However, these linkages are not made explicit by all definitions of digital justice considered here.

There is also, tentatively, some contestation over the use of the term which is differently defined by the UN and corporations such as Microsoft, as well as the WEF, which refers to mechanisms for corrective justice for infringements of rights due to data-driven technologies. Activists need to at least be aware of these alternative definitions as they are used in forums such as WSIS+20, or appear in

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21 See, for instance, Alison Gillwald's report in this edition of GISWatch.

22 "[A] newly developing industry that combines several sectors – agribusiness, biotechnology, digital/software technology, and financial technology." ETC Group. (2023, 8 November). Autonomy in the Face of Agtech. https://www.etcgroup.org/content/autonomy-face-agtech

policy and other documents. The latter definition may also prove useful within a digital justice framework as defined by activists.

The points on digital justice made following the meeting are broad. They offer perspectives that may or may not agree with different ideas of digital justice as defined by others – even some participating in the workshop may not agree with them. They do, however, emphasise that digital rights activists need to work across multiple fields of activity in order to oppose unbridled (or unregulated or poorly regulated) power within these fields, and need to create alliances and cross-field understandings to do this collaboratively. Engaging grassroots organisations and those with specialisations in areas such as trade contracts, IP law, AI, robotics and geoengineering, among other areas, is also necessary. They also suggest that in order to increase their influence, digital rights organisations need to work with constituency-based groups such as those who are part of the labour, climate and food justice movements. Working in this way allows digital rights organisations to connect their advocacy agendas with fields that digital technologies are impacting, but which are often less explored by them. Given the context of rapid, mass digitalisation and datafication across multiple areas of activity, and the powerful corporate interests in these areas, this cross-field collaboration is increasingly necessary.

Many digital rights organisations have been working in this way already. Particularly at the grassroots level in the global South, there are examples of organisations that may define themselves as internet or digital rights organisations and that work at the intersection of internet access and water rights, or farmer and land rights, etc. Work on community-centred connectivity initiatives by APC and Rhizomatica also seeks to strengthen communities in areas that are important to them, which may cut across economic, social or environmental concerns.[23] A number of organisations in the global South also have their roots in the 1990s when they provided internet connectivity and services to social and environmental justice organisations, among others.

However, the rapid pace of mass digitalisation and datafication across multiple fields of activity, and the myriad forums where "the digital" is discussed, calls for a form of movement building across sectors to effect change. "Digital justice"

– although troubled by alternative uses of the term – appears to offer a way for digital rights organisations to align with other constituency-based advocacy causes, and to collectively leverage the specialisations in these areas for cross-field policy advocacy, engagement, and pushing for wide-reaching systemic change.

Action steps

The following recommendations for governments and civil society organisations in the context of WSIS+20 and other processes such as the Global Digital Compact can be made based on this report:

For governments:

- Digitalisation and datafication imply structural changes to communities and to people's lives, with many clear empirical benefits that have been widely researched and documented and are evident in everyday experiences, but also negative consequences because of these changes. These consequences are also not only about issues such as privacy, security, freedom of expression and forms of online violence. They include but are in no way limited to the increased vulnerability and marginalisation of the poor, systemic inequalities and biases, the rapid dilution of cultures and knowledge, psychosocial dislocation, the precarity of work and an alienated labour force, severe health risks, insecurity of food and livelihoods, a loss of biodiversity, water stress from the location of server farms and the pollution of water systems with hazardous chemicals from e-waste, the depletion of the Earth's resources through mining for minerals used in technologies, displaced communities in these territories, the exploitation of women and children and targeted killings, the pollution of outer space, and more efficient ways of causing mass destruction and death during wars. Due to the uneven global distribution of the effects of the production and use of digital infrastructures and technologies, these consequences may not be felt locally but will nevertheless be felt locally elsewhere, and some inevitably have global ramifications, such as the increase in CO_2 emissions due to our use of technology, the worsening precarity of those already marginalised, or the impact of digital labour on workers' rights, among others.

- While *some* new vulnerabilities *may* be a consequence of changes that all major technological transformations bring, the

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23 See the report on meaningful connectivity by APC and Rhizomatica in this edition of GISWatch.

power structures implicit in the current pace of digitalisation and datafication, with the extractivist business models used by the corporate tech sector and other big businesses at the centre, and on which governments often rely, undermine the potential benefits that digital technologies and new data capabilities can bring to the world's majority.

- Alternative models of governing and regulating digital technologies need to be developed, and the experimental use of digital technologies needs to be properly mediated. Implementation needs to support the agency and life-worlds of the people most affected, and a global and local understanding of the impact of technologies on individuals, communities and the environment needs to be properly articulated in all instances of digital technologies being used.

- Digital justice seeks to empower ordinary people so that they can participate in the governance of digital technologies across different fields, and so that they are made meaningful and useful to them and their ways of being, rather than imposed on them without clear or rights-affirming consideration of their impact. In this respect, any digital justice movement should be seen as an ally in the struggle to build equality and just and sustainable societies, especially for the most marginalised and vulnerable.

For civil society organisations:

- Workshop the idea of "digital justice" within your organisation and with your allies and partners. Engage actors in fields such as food security, climate justice, economic justice and gender justice. Test how relevant the term "digital justice" is to them. Include actors with specialisations in areas such as trade, IP law, labour, agriculture and the environment, and experience in high-level forums where these are discussed. Include grassroots communities and their advocacy representatives.

- Map how the digital "plays out" in different fields and sectors. Who are the main corporations and institutions involved? Where are the forums where digital technology and data issues are discussed? What are the mechanisms for engagement, and what skills and experience are required to engage these forums?

- Familiarise yourself with alternative conceptions of digital justice, such as those used by the UN and WEF, as well as what other organisations might mean when they refer to "digital justice".

- Consider building a common digital justice advocacy agenda that cuts across different fields based on points of intersection in advocacy aims.

- Link up with those who are already doing this.

WSIS+20: REIMAGINING HORIZONS OF DIGNITY, EQUITY AND JUSTICE FOR OUR DIGITAL FUTURE

Twenty years ago, stakeholders gathered in Geneva at the first World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) and affirmed a "common desire and commitment to build a people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented Information Society."

This special edition of Global Information Society Watch (GISWatch) considers the importance of WSIS as an inclusive policy and governance mechanism, and what, from a civil society perspective, needs to change for it to meet the challenges of today and to meaningfully shape our digital future.

Expert reports consider issues such as the importance of the historical legacy of WSIS, the failing multistakeholder system and how it can be revived, financing mechanisms for local access, the digital inequality paradox, why a digital justice framing matters in the context of mass digitalisation, and feminist priorities in internet governance. While this edition of GISWatch asks: "How can civil society – as well as governments – best respond to the changed context in order to crystallise the WSIS vision?" it carries lessons for other digital governance processes such as the Global Digital Compact and NETmundial+10.

GLOBAL INFORMATION SOCIETY WATCH
2024 Report
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