The World Economic Forum has developed System Initiatives to serve as platforms to bring together leaders and experts to tackle global issues that require public-private collaboration to find viable solutions. Each initiative is comprised of bodies of work with results-oriented projects and activities that mobilize leadership, expertise and resources from business, government, civil society and international organizations.

How private-public collaboration can realize digital technology’s potential to benefit humankind

The exponential growth in digitization and internet connectivity is the backbone of the Fourth Industrial Revolution. It has the potential to propel societies forward, enable innovative business models and help governments address legitimate policy concerns.

Digitization is transforming business models, the policy landscape and social norms. The aim of the World Economic Forum’s System Initiative on Shaping the Future of Digital Economy and Society is to cultivate a shared, trusted digital environment that is a driver of inclusion, economic development and social progress. The System Initiative aims to create networks that enable and encourage action to promote the long-term health and stability of digitally enabled economies and societies through:

- Understanding the shift through leading-edge intelligence
- Collectively solving new issues via improved governance and policy-making in a digitized society
- Partnering to rapidly scale successes by cultivating an online environment of trust and increasing access and adoption

Core Activities

The System Initiative focuses on four bodies of work: access/adoption, digital governance, digital transformation of industries, and trust and resilience (cybercrime and cyber resilience). The portfolio of projects and activities under these issues includes:

Access/Adoption (Internet for All)

This project catalyzes internet access and adoption for the next 3 billion and ensures the creation of local content and infrastructure. The aim is to promote balance between private investment and policy objectives, mobilize multistakeholder on-the-ground implementation partnerships at country/region level, and develop a global platform for similar regional/global initiatives. Focus areas include:

- Regional partnerships for on-the-ground coordination and implementation (e.g. Northern Corridor, adding 25m users)
- A global platform for sharing intelligence, learnings and scaling best practices

Digital Policy and Governance

This project is developing relevant policy frameworks to adjust to the speed of technological change, and define the role of governments in working with business and civil society to shape the rules underpinning the digital ecosystem. Focus areas include:

- Expert groups to develop reference models and approaches to policy gaps (e.g.: Internet of Things)
- A public-private coalition to facilitate digitally enabled trade, in partnership with the System Initiative on International Trade and Investment
- A country/regional dialogue series on digital policies and priorities
Digital Transformation of Industries

This project, which includes 10 workstreams, is designed to explore the impact of digitization on business and society through a 10-year forward-looking assessment of relevant digital themes and a value-at-stake quantification for both industry and society. Areas of focus include:

- Aviation and travel
- Chemistry and advanced materials
- Mining and metals
- Oil and gas
- Professional services
- Retail
- Telecoms
- Three horizontal workstreams examining future digital workforces, platform economy, and societal value and policy implications

Trust and Resilience

Two projects focus on Cybercrime and Cyber Resilience. The Cybercrime project aims to foster a structured dialogue on information sharing, enhance cooperation between law enforcement authorities and develop tools/techniques that allow for better assessment of the cybercrime threat. Areas of focus include:

- Development of actionable recommendations for governments and businesses, as well as guidance on information sharing
- Development of a network of private and public actors committed to implementing these recommendations

The Cyber Resilience project strives to increase awareness, understanding and action on cyber risk into a fully-integrated strategic risk business framework. The outputs include board-level best practices, and executive cybergovernance and process guidelines and tools. Areas of focus include:

- Tools and best practices for board governance and processes (e.g. business risk framework, training guide, incident severity assessment, incident sharing guidelines)
- P2P dialogue on liability thresholds

How to Engage

Companies, governments and organizations have multiple opportunities to engage in the initiative:

Stewardship Board: Nominate a global chief executive or chair for consideration on the Stewardship Board, the principal-level, multistakeholder body of 20-40 members that provides strategic guidance to the system. Stewards are automatically members of the Core Community.

Core Community: Appoint senior executives or experts to participate in the multistakeholder Core Community of approximately 100 to 150 leading actors and experts who engage directly in the activities of the System Initiative and work to advance public-private cooperation more broadly on the given topic.

Project Steering Committees: Each project is guided by a Steering Committee that includes appointed experts and senior executives from partnering organizations.

Partnering Organizations

- Accenture
- Alibaba Group
- AT&T Inc.
- Navdeep Bains, Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development of Canada
- Cisco
- Cloudflare
- Cyberspace Administration of the People’s Republic of China
- Generation Investment Management LLP
- Mohammad Abdullah Al Gergawi, Minister of Cabinet Affairs of the UAE
- Google Inc.
- John Green, Novelist, YouTuber, vlogbrothers, USA
- Omobola Johnson, Former Minister of Communication Technology of Nigeria; Chair, Alliance for Affordable Internet
- GSMA
- Harvard University
- Huawei Technologies Co. Ltd
- Human Rights Watch
- International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL)
- International Telecommunication Union (ITU)
- Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN)
- Internet Governance Forum
- Paul Kagame, President of the Republic of Rwanda
- Zoe Keating, Cellist and Composer, Young Global Leader
- Doris Leuthard, Federal Minister for Environment, Transport, Energy and Communication of Switzerland
- LinkedIn
Key Dates

September

– Advancing Cyber Resilience Workshop, London, UK (15 Sept.)

October

– India Economic Summit, New Delhi, India (6-7 Oct.)
– Cybercrime Network Workshop, London, UK (10 Oct.)
– Internet for All: Transform Africa, Rwanda (20-21 Oct.)
– Value at Stake Workshop, Berlin, Germany (24-25 Oct.)

November

– Internet for All: Argentina Programme, Buenos Aires, Argentina (10 Nov.)
– Annual Meeting of Global Future Councils 2016, Dubai, UAE (13-14 Nov.)
– World Internet Conference, Wuzhen, China (16-18 Nov.)

December

– Internet Governance Forum, Guadalajara, Mexico (6-9 Dec.)

January 2017

– World Economic Forum Annual Meeting 2017, Stewardship Board Meeting and System Initiative sessions, Davos-Klosters, Switzerland (17-20 Jan.)

Contact

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