



VI INFOPOVERTY WORLD CONFERENCE

*Under the High Patronage of the President of the Republic of Italy
Under the Patronage of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Italy*

MULTI-STAKEHOLDER PARTNERSHIPS PAPER



ECOSOC NGO Forum Part II

‘VI Infopoverity World Conference’ *Conference Room 6, 20-21 April 2006*

OCCAM, is the creator of the Infopoverity World Conference in 2001 starting from the experiences of the first Villages implemented in Honduras after the country was hit by Hurricane Mitch in 1999.

OCCAM is the acting agency of the Infopoverity Programme, gathering more than 100 institutions worldwide and in the framework of the Infopoverity Programme the ICT Villages have been created thanks to the support and participation of some of the leading international organisations of the UN System included in the Advisory Board on ICT Villages created in 2004 on the occasion of PrepCom1 to the Tunis Phase of the WSIS



NGO Section, Department of Economic and Social Affairs

One United Nations Plaza, Room DC1 -1480, New York, NY, 10017,

Tel No: (212) 963-8652, Fax (212) 963 9248, www.un.org/esa/coordination/ngo email: desangosection@un.org

Introduction:

The ECOSOC NGO Forum this year is being held in two parts; while NGO Forum Part I was held on 6 April 2006, NGO Forum Part II titled, “VI Infopoverty World Conference” is being held on 20-21 April 2006. Active participation to the NGO Forum is facilitated by the two pilot countries of the United Nations Public Private Alliance for Rural Development, the Republic of Madagascar and the Dominican Republic.

The structure of the NGO Forum invites multi-stakeholder participation and was so decided to bring contributions of civil society and major stakeholders to the 2006 High Level Segment of ECOSOC. The outcome of this meeting will be presented at the HLS of ECOSOC (3-5 July 2006) at Geneva in the form of a coalition statement.

The theme for the 2006 High-level segment of the substantive session of ECOSOC:

“Creating an environment at the national and international levels conducive to generating full and productive employment and decent work for all, and its impact on sustainable development”

Background:

The theme of this year’s high level segment brings about a very strong linkage between the theme of the 2005 High Level Segment, the declaration made by the Heads of State and Government at the 2005 World Summit and the second phase of the World Summit on Information Society held in Tunis in November 2005.

Theme of the 2005 High level Segment:

The focus of the theme of the 2005 High Level Segment was *"Achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, as well as implementing the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits: progress made, challenges and opportunities"*.

“If economic growth is to make greater inroads against poverty, there is a need for smarter policies, more resources and closer partnerships.”

— Secretary-General Kofi Annan
High-Level Segment, ECOSOC,
New York, 29 June 2005

The 2005 World Summit:

The 2005 World Summit saw the largest gathering of world leaders in United Nations history who pledged to take action on a wide range of global issues and made a strong commitment to achieving the Millennium Development Goals -- a series of ambitious targets, ranging from halving extreme poverty, to halting the spread of HIV/AIDS and to providing universal primary education by 2015. Acknowledging that peace, security, development and human rights were central pillars of the United Nations, the leaders reaffirmed in the Summit’s sweeping outcome

document that “development was a central goal ... and that sustainable development in its economic, social and environmental aspects constituted a key element of the overarching framework of the United Nations activities”.

The 60th session of the General Assembly discussed both the needs for development and the impediments to development. While the need for developing countries increased access to information and communication technologies, better human resource skills, and micro-credit to stimulate employment and entrepreneurship, external debt relief, public-private partnerships, operational activities for development, and remittances was the focus of many discussions, some others identified the need to bolster the international financial system in averting global crises, improve debt restructuring, and protect developing countries from external shocks, maximizing the benefits and minimizing the negative impacts of globalization, which often served to marginalize developing economies from global economic growth.

Among major impediments to development that were discussed were the negative effects of climate change, natural disasters, desertification, rising oil prices, and transport problems, especially for least developed, landlocked and small island developing States were also discussed. Given the recent spate of natural disasters, such countries vitally needed assistance in putting together national and regional early warning systems and boosting their disaster-response capacities.

While the role of ICTs as an enabler is well acknowledged, the strengthening of global partnerships for development was also acknowledged by the introduction of a new item this year on ‘*Global Partnerships*’ in the Second Committee. This underscored the importance of corporate responsibility, urging the international community to promote respect for local communities and eradicate human rights abuses.

“We strongly support a fair globalization and resolve to make the goals of full and productive employment and decent work for all, including for women and young people, a central objective of our national and international macro-economic policies as well as poverty reduction strategies. These measures should also encompass the elimination of child labor. We also resolve to protect the human rights of workers”...declaration by the Heads of State and Government at the 2005 World Summit

WSIS, Tunis:

Finally, the common vision and guiding principles of the Declaration adopted at the WSIS, Tunis were translated into a Plan of Action to advance the achievement of the internationally-agreed development goals, including those in the Millennium Declaration, the Monterrey Consensus and the Johannesburg Declaration and Plan of Implementation, by promoting the use of ICT-based products, networks, services and applications, and to help countries overcome the digital divide. The Information Society envisaged in the Declaration of Principles will be realized in cooperation and solidarity by governments and all other stakeholders.

Strength in the belief that if the goals contained in the Millennium Declaration, especially in such areas as poverty alleviation, health, education, infrastructure, and the environment have to



NGO Section, Department of Economic and Social Affairs

One United Nations Plaza, Room DC1 -1480, New York, NY, 10017,

Tel No: (212) 963-8652, Fax (212) 963 9248, www.un.org/esa/coordination/ngo, email: desangosection@un.org

be met, the role of Information and communication technologies (ICTs) as critical enablers in the development process including generating productive employment and decent work will have to be at the center of economic and social policies designed to achieve the internationally agreed development goals, particularly the central Millennium Development Goal of halving extreme poverty by 2015.

Poverty

There was wide ranging discussion of the current definitions of poverty, including the OECD definition based on 1\$ per day and the World Bank's recent definition based on lack of opportunity, lack of security and lack of empowerment (WDR 2001). In recognition to WDR, ILO had always seen poverty as more than a lack of resources and that rights, participation, representation and voice are important dimensions.

What is Infopoverty?

Infopoverty is the lack of access to basic information that will empower individuals and communities to improve their circumstances. When the lack of connectivity prevents individuals and communities from accessing information necessary to provide safety and a sense of belonging to the world, info-poverty is present... **Infopoverty Institute**, The University of Oklahoma.

"We were convinced that we should invest every penny we have on securing the next meal for our people. We did not believe serious investment in ICT had anything to do with facing the challenges of poverty that kills. Now I think we know better. We recognize that while ICT may be a luxury for the rich, for us the poor countries, it is a vital and essential tool for fighting poverty - for beating poverty that kills - and ensuring our survival,"

His Excellency Meles Zenawi Prime Minister of the
Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

A quote from His Excellency Meles Zenawi Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia is probably the most realistic definition that exists.

Themes and Issues guiding the discussions:

While issues, themes and best practices that can address the digital divide and concerns of Infopoverty will remain the focus, the discussions are intended to bring forth strong recommendations towards generating full and productive employment and decent work for all, and its impact on sustainable development including the integration of ICTs as a tool for development and bridging the digital divide by strengthening and identifying Public- Private Partnerships.

The WSIS Plan of Action adopted in Geneva during the First Phase of the WSIS including the eleven Action Lines contained in Document WSIS-03/GENEVA/DOC/5-E will guide the discussions and recommendations that will be presented by the speakers during the NGO Forum Part II. The WSIS Plan of action can be accessed at:

<http://www.itu.int/wsis/docs/geneva/official/poa.html>

Partnerships at the NGO Forum:

I. UN-NGO-IRENE:

The United Nations NGO Informal Regional Network was established to help achieve the NGO capacity-building to take part in United Nations work, support the coalition of NGOs and disseminate the work of the Council; underlining the need to facilitate communication and exchange among and between regions through cooperation and collaborative activities.

It also provides technical assistance in order to ensure increased participation of NGOs from developing countries and countries with economies in transition in the work of the Council and its subsidiary bodies.

It provides training for network managers at the sub-regional levels and network users, as required, designing and conducting capacity-building workshops, seminars and training programmes to strengthen NGO capabilities for effective contribution, at both operational and policy levels.

It also facilitates organizing national, subregional and regional conferences/meetings, together with government, intergovernmental bodies, the United Nations and NGOs, with a view to facilitating and enabling an environment conducive to the development of an active and effective NGO sector, creating opportunities for NGOs to interact in order to promote cooperation, sharing of resources and collaborative action among network participants.

For more info, please visit: <http://www.unpan.org/NGO.asp>

II. The UNPPA for Rural development:

The United Nations Public-Private Alliance (UNPPA) for Rural Development underlines the importance of partnerships at the national and international levels in order to foster collaboration in different sectors. At the national and local levels, to encourage local authorities, civil society, the private sector and local communities to launch partnerships that support and promote rural development. At the international level, to facilitate and nurture alliances of governments, donors, non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations and the private sector for promoting integrated rural development.”

It was established to identify, highlight, and promote replication of successful business policies and practices that are both profitable and promote social and economic advancement of poor people in rural areas. It emphasizes promotion of pro-poor business, stimulation of entrepreneurial capacity-building, encouragement of investments and commerce, and related support domestically and internationally through strong public private partnerships. Results of this win-win approach will be brought to the attention of the international community through the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

The UN Alliance networks with and builds upon a range of existing programmes and concerns. These include efforts by FAO, the World Bank, UNDP, IFAD, UNCTAD, ILO, the UN Global Compact, and the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs. Outside the UN, a number of business associations are relevant, including the World Business Council for Sustainable Development, the International Chamber of Commerce, and the Business Council for the United Nations, Rotary Clubs, and the World Agriculture Forum.



NGO Section, Department of Economic and Social Affairs

One United Nations Plaza, Room DC1 -1480, New York, NY, 10017,

Tel No: (212) 963-8652, Fax (212) 963 9248, www.un.org/esa/coordination/ngo, email: desangosection@un.org

The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) approved Madagascar as the first pilot country in 2004. In 2005, the Dominican Republic was approved as the second pilot country. Other countries, including Angola have also expressed interest and are being considered.

For more info, please visit: <http://www.un.org/esa/coordination/Alliance/home>

III. Global Alliance for ICT and Development:

The recent approval of the Global Alliance for ICT and Development by the Secretary General of the United Nations has further emphasized the need for an open, inclusive, multi-stakeholder cross-sectoral dialogue on the role of ICT in development. It will thus contribute to linking the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society with the broader United Nations development agenda.

For more info, please visit: <http://www.unicttaskforce.org>

Best Practices at the NGO Forum:

I. One dollar for development:

One Dollar for Development' is based on no-cost software technology transfer from developed to developing countries at the symbolic price of one dollar. The potential of this 'not for profit' initiative is its capacity to contribute to the reduction of digital gaps.

The underlying rationale for this initiative is that, sustainable MDG-based strategies of developing countries require significant public investments to spur local scientific innovation and technological development. There are many Countries, which have successfully developed and deployed e-Government applications in many key areas such as Justice, Security, Healthcare, Welfare, Transport and Education.

Without having to reinvest and at a fraction of the initial development costs, most of these applications could be easily duplicated, re-deployed and put in use in developing countries to support local innovation and technological development with far reaching impacts on the national economy in general and in the field of governance in particular.

The ODFD initiative aims at making available at no cost e-Government applications owned by developed countries to developing countries by encouraging the North-South and South-South cooperation as an effective contribution to development and as a means to share and transfer good practices and technologies.

The initiative seeks support from developed countries owning such applications to make available their in-use software which in turn will be transferred to the developing countries at a symbolic price of one dollar (the price of the CD-ROM used to store the application).

For more info, please visit:

<http://www.un.org/esa/coordination/Alliance/Dominican%20Republic%20One%20dollar%20for%20Development.htm>

II. ICT Village:

The project has the objective of Creation of a replicable and affordable model:

To grant to the disadvantaged community in the Dominican Republic access to the digital revolution and reap its opportunities for a sustainable development, thanks to the convergence of UN system agencies and programmes, as well as leading private companies and the civil society.

To experiment on the field the most advanced technologies, applications and services that are both fit to the needs of the communities and easy to use by all, so that positive effects can be rapidly achieved: providing solutions to emergencies (in fields such as health, education, food & water) and spurring endogenous development (creating jobs, building capacity, promoting the communitarian participation of all).

In order to realise those goals, the project is intended to provide connectivity to a village in Madagascar to deliver to its population the following advanced services:

- Telemedicine
 - E-learning
 - E-government
 - E-commerce
1. The ICT village model will be prepared on the model set for the World Summit on the Information Society 2005.
 2. The realisation of the project will be completed bearing in mind that the project is intended, by all the partners in the initiative, as: Experimental area where all implemented technologies can be progressively tested, including the evaluation on their social, economic and cultural effects on the population;
 3. Living lab open to all stakeholders;
 4. Generator of ICT for development innovation, especially designed for the needs of emerging countries;
 5. Opportunity for enhanced international cooperation;
 6. Node of the organised community groups and of the connectivity net on the territory;
 7. Further support and strengthening of the strategies of the UN Alliance in the fields of job and micro-enterprises creation;
 8. Area of evaluation and improvement of incumbent broadband wireless services that are revolutionising even the developed countries.

The project will be implemented in a village in the Dominican Republic chosen in agreement with the Government of the Dominican Republic and relevant institutions involved in the UN Alliance.

Convergence among the partners of the project, each with its best practices, will be able to bridge rural emargination, granting to the community knowledge, health, jobs.

In particular, the projects will deliver:



NGO Section, Department of Economic and Social Affairs

One United Nations Plaza, Room DC1 -1480, New York, NY, 10017,

Tel No: (212) 963-8652, Fax (212) 963 9248, www.un.org/esa/coordination/ngo, email: desangosection@un.org

An innovative Teleport, equipped with a portable satellite kit, powered also by solar energy, able to receive and distribute broadband WIMAX signals (satellite or terrestrial) for the whole territory and work as antenna for mobile communication.

Three community centres:

- Centre of Access
- School
- Health Presidium

A co-ordinated training activity for the local staff, which will involve the community in the practical use of ICT as contribution to local needs

Some broadband services, hosted in the above mentioned centres such as:

1. E-governance, in the community centre of access, tied to the local government authority, with a communitarian centre of access, where the population can start learning how to use ICT (internet, e-mail, word processing) under the supervision of local trainers, and where they can have access to basic services such as the distribution of ID, permits, licences, official documents, visa, passports, etc.).
2. E-learning, in the primary school, to be closely linked to the existing school structures, endowed with didactic room and interactive computer lab. A network of Universities will take care of this part of the Project, guided by the University of Oklahoma, which has a very strong experience in this field and has developed a series of models fit to the needs of this kind of communities.
3. Telemedicine, in the health presidium, to be inserted in the local medical facilities. In the following months the services delivered through a specific portal will include diagnosis, prognosis, prescriptions, special services for disabled people and eventually light distance surgery thanks to the participation of a network of local and international hospitals, research centres and centres of excellence, extended to the basic consulting for botanic and herding diseases.
4. The project is also intended as opportunity to test and promote ICT for development innovation, specifically designed for the needs of emerging countries, thus promoting the new tools that can really fit demands different from those of OECD countries.

For more info, please visit:

<http://www.un.org/esa/coordination/Alliance/DRICTmodelvillage.htm>

III. Navajo Nation:

Navajo Nation signed a historic MOU to open international Internet office in Window Rock. The United Nations Millennium Project has identified three things that can bring the world's poor out of extreme poverty – information, communications and technology – known as ICT. The Navajo Nation is now using ICT of its own to deliver distance learning, economic opportunity, telemedicine, e-government and public safety to remote communities throughout its 27,000-squaremile land base.

For the past five years, the International Telecommunications Union (ITU), a specialized agency of the UN based in Geneva, Switzerland, has worked to find ways to use ICT to end poverty. The goal of the Tunisia meeting is to complete a blueprint to implement a UN-sponsored plan to use ICT to end extreme poverty by the year 2025.

ITU has recognized the work done by the Navajo Nation to bring information, communications and technology to its citizens as one of the most advanced systems in the emerging nations and one that can be reproduced by other indigenous nations. Because of this, the Navajo Nation is expected to take a leadership role to represent indigenous issues to the world beginning with this summit.

President Shirley signed a memorandum of understanding with the ITU and the Observatory for Cultural and Audiovisual Communication, a non-governmental organization of UNESCO based in Milan, Italy. The MOU is to establish an OCCAM office in Window Rock. The office would support the creation of a global indigenous people's portal to the Internet from the Navajo Nation to create one of the world's largest wireless Internet networks.

Today, all 110 Navajo chapters now have free wireless Internet connections and computers where any Navajo can have an e-mail address and get online for free. In addition, every chapter and most Navajo Nation divisions, departments and programs have their own websites. "The most important thing is that our people are communicating with their government, and their government is communicating with them," President Shirley said. "As President, I need to hear from my people, whether they are in a community center or living far away from Navajoland, whether working, in school, or serving in the armed forces in a foreign country."

OCCAM, was created in 1997 by UNESCO – the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. Since then, OCCAM has promoted UN values of peace, tolerance and human rights in the fields of all audiovisual means of communication.

Earlier this year, OCCAM was granted Special Consultative Status by the Economic and Social Council of the UN and is currently active in more than 15 countries, with an antenna in Window Rock and one in Antalya, Turkey.

The Navajo Nation ICT Community Development objectives include:

1. Providing stable telecommunications to every Navajo community.
2. Increase the visibility of technology projects in each community and increase individual participation.
3. Serve as a catalyst for increasing technology-related activities.
4. Create well-trained, community-based staff.
5. Offer leadership and management training in finance, property management, personnel,
6. Government development and land use planning.
7. Provide an online business site for local craftsmen, weavers and entrepreneurs to market their products.
8. Promote self-sustainability and technology projects at each chapter.



NGO Section, Department of Economic and Social Affairs

One United Nations Plaza, Room DC1 -1480, New York, NY, 10017,

Tel No: (212) 963-8652, Fax (212) 963 9248, www.un.org/esa/coordination/ngo, email: desangosection@un.org