

**COMMISSION ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY FOR DEVELOPMENT  
(CSTD)**

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**Submissions from entities in the United Nations system and elsewhere on  
their efforts in 2015 to implement the outcome of the WSIS**

**Submission by**

World Health Organization (WHO)

This submission was prepared as an input to the report of the UN Secretary-General on "Progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society at the regional and international levels" (to the 18<sup>th</sup> session of the CSTD), in response to the request by the Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 2006/46, to the UN Secretary-General to inform the Commission on Science and Technology for Development on the implementation of the outcomes of the WSIS as part of his annual reporting to the Commission.

**DISCLAIMER:** The views presented here are the contributors' and do not necessarily reflect the views and position of the United Nations or the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.

### ***World Summit on the Information Society: eHealth action line (C7)***

*Priority areas in the action line include improving health information systems, facilitating access to knowledge and information, promoting international standards for exchange of health data, and strengthening systems for disaster response and communicable diseases monitoring and alert.*

#### **Summary**

The World Health Assembly in 2005 encouraged Governments to develop long-term strategies for e-health.<sup>1</sup> The number of countries with national e-health strategies rose from 55 to 116 during the period 2009–2015. Across the world, ICTs are contributing to making health services and systems more efficient, safe and effective. There has been increased adoption of e-health tools, including mobile technologies, for health services delivery; for example in health promotion, clinical care, research and public health interventions.

The Global Observatory for eHealth of the World Health Organization reports that progress on WSIS outcomes is encouraging. Yet progress in eHealth has not been systematic, and opportunities to continue to build foundations, policy and the workforce should be emphasised. The Observatory's latest global survey on eHealth was concluded in 2015 with 125 country e-health profiles available online and a comprehensive report due in May 2016.<sup>2</sup>

The crucial importance of ICT for global emergency and humanitarian response has been highlighted by recent disease epidemics, natural disasters and conflicts. ICT enables timely local reporting and mapping, including through social media, the rapid and secure sharing of information, the use of web-based and mobile technologies alongside traditional media for public information exchange, and the connection of communities with front-line personnel for health action and response. The efficient and effective coordination of the many agencies, NGOs and other actors involved would not be possible without ICT.

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf\\_files/WHA58/WHA58\\_28-en.pdf](http://www.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA58/WHA58_28-en.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.who.int/goe>