

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

**Contribution to the CSTD ten-year review of the implementation of WSIS
outcomes**

Submitted by

OCCAM

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United Nations Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD)

Questionnaire for CSTD's 10-year review of WSIS implementation

The same questionnaire is available online: <http://unctad.org/en/Pages/CSTD.aspx>

Please share your experience, views and priorities in response to the following questions, addressing the issues that you consider most important for the CSTD's ten-year WSIS review. Issues that you might consider could include any or more of the following, but need not be confined to these:

- infrastructure, access and inclusiveness;
- content, applications and capacity-building;
- technical, financial and related issues;
- governance and wider public policy aspects of the Information Society;
- social, economic and other development activities and impacts;
- the implications of new trends in technology and services;
- measurement and monitoring of the Information Society; and
- the relationship between the Information Society, sustainable development and the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

1. To what extent, in your experience, has the "people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented Information Society", envisaged in the opening paragraph of the WSIS Geneva Declaration of Principles, developed in the ten years since WSIS?

During the World Summit on the Information Society organized by the United Nations in Tunis in November 2005, due to the commitment the Advisory Board together with the local authorities, OCCAM realized the first demo within the community of Borj Touil in Tunisia, leading to the opening of a new Centre of Community Access, the School, and the Health Centre. Each of the sites was provided with appropriate technologies based on the people's needs and the ICT village model was certified at the UN level and was recognized as efficient device in the battle against poverty with the help of communication technologies.

The Tunis Declaration endorsed by the participants in the Infopoverty Seminar has certified the ICT Village model set by the Advisory Board whose members are leading representatives of the most prestigious international organizations (such as ESA, FAO, ITU, IFRC, UNDESA, UNDP, UNESCO and the World Bank). The ICT Village project has been replicated in the framework of the UN Public-Private Alliance for Rural Development in its pilot countries Madagascar and the Dominican Republic. All the projects realized were targeted for the needs of the peoples.

2. How far do you consider the implementation of specific WSIS outcomes to have been achieved?

Over more than a decade, OCCAM has been working on pilot applications of new technologies for social, economic and cultural development with the main objective of fighting poverty. We kept on in our engagement by organizing the annual Infopoverty World Conference and implementing the Infopoverty World Programme. In this high level context, OCCAM confirms its status as leading organisation for the realisation of digital villages aiming at fighting poverty through the ICTs, to fit the needs of disadvantaged communities in emerging countries. However, there is still a lot to do, the results achieved are still not enough.

3. How has the implementation of WSIS outcomes contributed towards the development of a "people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented Information Society"?

The great interest expressed by populations and the immediate intervention of governments have made possible and desirable the replication of the ICT Borj Touil model in many other countries, such as Lesotho, Ethiopia, Ghana, Madagascar, South Liban, Honduras and Peru, in close relationship with United Nations agencies, other NGOs and civil society.

The results of these actions have been regularly presented at the UN headquarters in New York during the annual Infopoverty World Conference, which contributes implementing the system, promoting the diffusion of these results to the main UN institutions and governments and allowing the testing of all the experimental operations.

However, in many regions there are still populations lacking of assistance, an aspect that we have marked in our last Infopoverty World Conference, A great effort is needed, as we have demanded in the last conference. See final declaration attached.

4. What are the challenges to the implementation of WSIS outcomes?What are the challenges that have inhibited the emergence of a "people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented Information Society"?

The great challenge is to make the WSIS outcome model applicable to different regions in the world, for in many regions there are still populations lacking of primary services.

Another great challenge is to exploit the potential of digital services in the field of education and healthcare as a fundamental catalyst in the economic and social development, stressing on the importance and the impact of telemedicine.

5. How are these challenges being addressed? What approaches have proved to be effective in your experience?

OCCAM's experience includes the presentation and certification of:

1. different e-services for e-learning and e-health at the United Nations Commission on Science and Technology for Development, 2010 and 2011;
2. ICT Village model at the World Summit on the Information Society held in Tunis in November 2005 and its replica in Sambaina (Madagascar) which was proclaimed UN Millennium Village.

The model of intervention implemented in Sambaina exploits the ICTs for poverty eradication and development through the deployment of e-services such as e-learning, e-training, e-health and tele-medicine, where we have trained 85 doctors and midwives at the national level to the communities to be directly involved for the improvement of the healthcare system.

The Digital Services Global Platform is at the heart also of the E-MedMed Project. It is able to provide e-health education, medical assistance and services to patients exploiting technological innovation and relevant contents. OCCAM presents this project to the Union for Mediterranean as an experimented practice, able to implement an innovative method of cooperation that guarantees the respect of local identities and stimulates communities' abilities to reach a sustainable development.

6. What do you consider the most important emerging trends in technology and other aspects of ICTs which have affected implementation of WSIS outcomes since the Summit? What has been their impact?

The most evident trend is social networks, social media, and the coming of device mobile, that empowered the relationship between the government and the population. These technologies allowed the population to be an active part of the change, as in the Arab spring. Being connected makes people more conscious of their rights and the ways get them.

7. What should be the priorities for stakeholders seeking to achieve WSIS outcomes and progress towards the Information Society, taking into account emerging trends?

It depends on which stakeholder we are talking about. There are three types, each one with its own priorities:

1. Governments: e-governance, seeking to give a structure to the government
2. enterprises: make profit
3. civil society: improving wellbeing of the populations

The great challenge is to gather round this trend in a people centered politics.

8. What role should information and communications play in the implementation of the post-2015 development agenda?

It's basic: it depends on which kind of information and communication we mean. In our opinion contents are important, it is not sufficient spread the information, we need a more people centered and interactive communicative structure where people can participate

9. Please add any other comments that you wish to make on the subject of the review that you believe would be helpful.

We are convinced that ICT can really change the paradigm of the development if their applications are focused on social purposes, in particular to fight poverty, as stated in Occam's mission and the related Infopoverty Program and World Conference (IWC)

The IWC annual declarations (see infopoverty.net) are the milestone of the strategy elaborated at the UN headquarters to design a correct convergence between the private issues for profit, and the social needs of the population.

We are warning about the prevalence of the telecoms and ICT companies' policy if only oriented to the speculative applications, and we auspice that a private-public alliance will be re-launched to accelerate the achievement of the SDGs.

We would also welcome any documents, reports, etc. that you can forward which you think will provide useful evidence for the review. Please send these to cstd-wsis10@unctad.org.