world summit
on the information society
Geneva 2003 - Tunis 2005

ICT for Development
Platform

Geneva, 9th-13th December 2003
www.ict-4d.org

ICT4D Forum

---> Connecting people for a better life!

Report by Walter Fust, Director-General of the Swiss Agency for Development and
Cooperation (SDC) to the Reporting Session of the World Summit on the
Information Society (WSIS)
12 December 2003

- The objective of the ICT4D Platform in Hall 4 of Palexpo, jointly organized by the Swiss Agency
  for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the Global Knowledge Partnership (GKP), was to
  realize a combination of Exhibition and Forum for Conferences in order to allow a true
  multistakeholder event. The ICT4D Platform focused on:

  - showcasing
  - debates
  - action

  A further objective was to put ICTs as a tool for development on the map of the Summit and on
  the mind of its participants and the public. It was meant to be complementary to the political
  sequence of the Summit.

- These objectives have been reached:

  - Until this moment over 30'000 people have visited the Platform.

  - 245 Exhibitors from 80 countries have showcased their activities and solutions. More than
    50 panels and 70 conferences have been held.

  - Different initiatives and projects have been launched and a number of prices have been
    awarded to ICT-Champions from all over the world.

  - The number of Heads of States (20) who have visited the Platform was a positive indicator
    to confirm the complementarity to the political part of the Summit.

- The results will be made available on the website WSIS.online and through GKP
  (www.globalknowledge.org). A special CD-Rom on the Platform (exhibitions and the results of
  the conferences) will be produced. A number of follow-up activities will follow to enhance the
  continuation of our work in order to feed into the process leading to Tunis.

The ICT for Development Platform is a major summit event
organised by the Swiss Agency for Development and
Cooperation (SDC) and the Global Knowledge Partnership (GKP)

DEZA
DDC
DSC
SDC
COSUDE

GLOBAL
KNOWLEDGE PARTNERSHIP   GKP

- Allow me to conclude with 6 examples of numerous concerns and recommendations repeatedly experienced:

  1) We should be well aware of the fragility of records of information. The historical documents of Timbuktu are thousands of years old. Will the records of this Summit still be available in 100 years from now?

  2) Business as usual is not sufficient to address the issue of the Information Society. Social inclusiveness and shared access to technologies will be of utmost importance.

  3) It is obvious that we need to pool all our resources and knowledge to better reach the Millenium Development Goals (MDGs). ICTs are tools to do so.

  4) The time has come to go beyond the ever-piloting phase of projects. For up-scaling and mainstreaming we need true multistakeholder partnerships, innovative approaches and solutions, also with regard to financing ICTs.

  5) To pool resources and to work together we need a more entrepreneurial spirit and a change of mind sets, cultures and rules. We have to go for opportunities and not for limiting the access to information and knowledge.

  6) ICTs should not be seen as stand alone investments. They have to be seen in the context of the overall development of society. They are about "Connecting people for a better life" (tagline of the ICT4D Platform).

- Thank you for your attention.