

# GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT COMMONS FORUM READOUT

November 27, 2007 - National Press Club

The first Global Development Commons (GDC) Forum took place on November 27th at the National Press Club bringing together development specialists and information sharing experts to discuss the concept of the GDC and "next steps".

## I. AM PANEL SESSIONS

The morning session featured presentations by Administrator Fore and recognized experts. Mark Fleeton of the Development Gateway Foundation and Helga Leifsdottir of ReliefWeb explored the challenges and successes of building, launching, and maintaining on-line information sharing platforms to inform the Global Development Commons. Corey Griffin of the Microsoft Corporation discussed its partnership with USAID and local communities to teach ICT. He discussed Microsoft's goal to expand internet connectivity to the next five billion people in the "middle to lower ends" of the connectivity pyramid. Mr. Griffin emphasized the need to expand public-private partnerships to realize this initiative. John Steffens of Infopoverty Institute and William Reese of International Youth Foundation described some of the latest trends in bringing development information to youth through social networking. They also advocated working with local partners at the grass roots level. Both were supportive of the GDC. All cautioned about "over reaching", the need for stable funding sources, and argued for some country-specific pilot testing as a way to get started. As a group, the five panels were enthusiastic about future cooperation and partnership with USAID to further the GDC.

## II. KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Dr. James H. Billington, the Librarian of Congress (LOC), gave the keynote address. Dr. Billington discussed the challenges of information sharing based on the LOC's experience working on the World Digital Library (WDL) initiative with UNESCO. Dr. Billington focused on the "content" of what is being shared and stressed the need to be highly sensitive to each culture. Small country-specific projects have been successful for the LOC and WDL. Dr. Billington was enthusiastic about the ways in which the Library of Congress can be a partner and potential collaborator with USAID on the Global Development Commons.

## III. PM BREAKOUT SESSIONS and NEXT STEPS

During breakout sessions, all forum participants formed three discussion groups to dialogue on how to strengthen the GDC. The initial session, "Stocktaking", explored the GDC concept with participants, incorporating their particular expertise, connections, and field-level experience to "build out" the GDC concept. Forum participants emphasized the need to utilize the latest trends in information sharing technologies to advance the GDC and ensure its relevance for citizens of developing countries.

During the second breakout portion participants discussed next steps. The following views reflect the contribution of the expert participants:

1. **Start with a few countries.** Approach connectivity barriers and GDC opportunities by country or by sector.
  2. **The GDC must be demand driven.** Assess in-country demand, potential end users, and possible platforms.
  3. **The GDC must be incentivized.** Incentives must be provided to secure citizen, country, and partner buy-in.
  4. **The GDC must add value.** Assess what tools and partners are already present-do not reinvent websites, platforms, blogs, etc.
  5. **Resolve GDC ownership issues early.** Governance should be established outside of USAID. A U.S. Government led GDC will be problematic without a cross-representation of the development community and private sector.
  6. **Don't go it alone.** GDC can be achieved only through partnerships with development and information sharing/technology organizations.
  7. **Better define the GDC.** USAID has made a good start with the basic concepts and principles, but the concept must be articulated more comprehensively.
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**For further information concerning the Forum, please see the following:**

Please click [here](#) to read the transcript of Administrator Fore's Remarks.

Please click below to view excerpts of slides from the Global Development Commons forum presentations:

- [USAID](#)
- [Microsoft](#)
- [Development Gateway](#)
- [ReliefWeb](#)
- [International Youth Foundation](#)

# Remarks by Henrietta H. Fore, Director of Foreign Assistance and USAID Administrator

## Introduction: Global Development Commons

Well, good morning everyone, and it really is good to see you. And I had thought that I was coming in by video, but I came back early; we had one of those really whirlwind trips where we were in Kenya and then, as things began deteriorating in Bangladesh, I wanted to be sure that we were there. We, USAID, was there in Bangladesh at that time of need and then on for Thanksgiving in Darfur and Jeddah and Sudan, and then Ethiopia and then coming back last night for the beginning of the peace conference. But therefore, it means that I can be with you today and I think the global development commons is so important that I wanted just to kick it off; and I wish I could stay with you the whole day but I cannot; but I know you will have very, very good and interesting sessions.

I wanted to be here because I think that the breadth of experience and expertise, and the new ways of thinking that you will bring to this are part of what we need for a global development commons. So I want to be sure that you are thinking with innovation and creativity about the world that lies ahead; not the world which is, but the world that will be. I am hoping that this forum will be the first step towards building the commons that will be populated with a network of partners that will open and strengthen and make more purposeful the lines of communication in the development community around the world.

Our greatest challenge in the development community is filling knowledge gaps: knowledge of world's best practices, knowledge of a marketplace of ideas, of what is at work in each country; knowledge on goods and services, knowledge of donors and projects, knowledge of who is at work in each country, with which partners and with what results. And we need a good dialogue to understand the country in the development context so that knowledge is vibrant and relevant. We need better communication that can enhance the clarity of action of thousands and thousands of people and organizations, governments and donors around the world.

And I appeal to you this morning, as well as to the larger development community, a community of experts and partners, to join me and to join USAID in a new quest to create a knowledge-centered commons, a place where knowledge management and networking will allow all of our partners throughout the world to connect and collaborate with one another, and to do it in real time.

We will continue to build on our past accomplishments, but this is not enough. The number of people and organizations of corporations and governments, and the complexity of the issues that we face demand that build a more comprehensive and efficient resource network to enhance our knowledge and information exchange. We must relinquish the idea of commanded control; instead, we must cooperate and collaborate and communicate. The global development commons will rely on interconnections, on information institutions and businesses and organizations and governments. It will rely on all of us. We must join as citizens within a country, within a region and around the globe to create a truly global development commons. Genuine consultation and increased collaboration efforts within our own development community, with civil society and with governments, will ultimately make our shared commitment, and the network that supports it, much stronger.

To start this conversation, there is a principle that I would like to offer. While many of us are devoted to our own businesses and our own organizations and our agencies, I believe we are most successful when we put the host country at the center of our thinking: its priorities, its capacities, its norms; and that local design is placed at the center of our collective action. We are here to envision and begin to build a resource that will help us further this end.

We are at the beginning of a great new era of partnerships, with an explosion of new actors and ideas and solutions and participants, hailing from a wide variety of sectors throughout the world. In this era, we need to seek new understanding of many, many ways to approach and get results in international development to improve our knowledge of development so that together, we can help the people most in need.

I wish all of you good luck in your noble endeavor. We have with us today a world-class development and information set of technology partners, and I am excited and I'm sure that you are too, to hear about innovations that are taking place on web-based development solutions, connectivity and information-sharing practices. I want to strengthen our existing partnerships and I would, together, like to create an even stronger set of partnerships so that together we will create a global development commons.

Thank you all very much.

(Applause.)



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FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

# Global Development Commons

**Global Development Commons Forum: National Press Club  
November 27<sup>th</sup>, 2007**

**Dr. Steven Gale**

**Principal Advisor for Strategic Communications**

**Bureau for Legislative and Public Affairs**

**U. S. Agency for International Development (USAID)**

**[http://www.usaid.gov/about\\_usaid/gdc/](http://www.usaid.gov/about_usaid/gdc/)**



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## MAJOR DEVELOPMENT TRENDS

TRADITIONAL FOCUS	NEW DIRECTION
Public and Government Institutions	Private Sector and Voluntary Organizations
Official Development Assistance	Private Capital Flows and Remittances
National Development Strategies	National, Sub-national, and Regional Plans
Development Practitioner Awareness	Public and Private Engagement
“Sole Proprietor” Approach	Evolving and Expanding Partnerships
Domestic and Local Market Oriented	International and Regional Trade Strategy
Providing Goods and Services	Building Capacity/Strengthening Institutions
Stable and Secure Environments	Unstable and Ungoverned Environments
Civilian-led Development	Civilian-Military Cooperation



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# INFORMATION SHARING TRENDS

<b>GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT COMMONS</b>		
	<b>TRADITIONAL FOCUS</b>	<b>NEW DIRECTION</b>
	<b>INFORMATION SEEKING</b>	<b>ACTIVE INFORMATION EXCHANGE</b>
<b>FUNCTION</b>	One Way PC Based Emails	Feedback Loop Mobile Based Wiki Interface
	<b>INFORMATION</b>	<b>EVOLVING KNOWLEDGE</b>
<b>CONTENT</b>	Passive Review Text Provider Based	Active Contribution Text, Video & Voice (Mash Up) User Based
	<b>EXPERT OWNERSHIP &amp; KNOWLEDGE</b>	<b>PARTICIPATORY OWNERSHIP &amp; KNOWLEDGE</b>
<b>DEVELOPMENT</b>	Academic U.S. Government Private Sector Local Non-Governmental Organizations	Community (Communal/Collective Intelligence)

## **The “Development Times” They Are A-Changing**

**Dr. Steven Gale, Principal Advisor for Strategic  
Communications,  
Bureau for Legislative and Public Affairs,  
U. S. Agency for International Development (USAID)**

Bob Dylan, the American singer-songwriter, author, and musician-poet, got it right a few years ago when he said the “Times They Are A-Changing”. He was of course referring to what he saw as a “generation gap” facing those who became politically aware in the 1960s and their predecessors. A few of us here can still remember some of those famous lines "come senators, congressmen, please heed the call".

Nearly five decades later, the “Times They are A' Changing” seems like an apt message for today’s seismic shifts in development assistance and Internet use. In just a few short years, ground-breaking changes have taken place in development theory and practices along with dizzying advances in information technology, knowledge sharing, and internet communication. And, these dramatic trends show no signs of slowing down any time soon. These shifts in development and internet use provide a serious challenge to the *status quo* and an exciting opportunity for our development and internet community.

This **FIRST TABLE** highlights some of the recent development trends. On the left column are the more traditional approaches to development assistance and on the right are more recent trends such as the shift to:

-- Private Sector and Foundations;

- Sub-national and Regional plan over National Development Strategies;
- Increasing work in poorly or ungoverned spaces; and,
- Civilian and military “development coordination and cooperation” not just humanitarian assistance.

One startling fact that has received considerable attention in the last few months—*remittances from workers abroad back to their home country*—clearly exemplifies the swift pace of change. Last year, according to a recent report, these workers sent home nearly \$300 billion dollars to their countries of origin compared with less than \$100 million just 7 years ago. The remittances by themselves are nearly **three times** the world’s foreign aid budgets combined, some have estimated.

Similarly, Official Development Assistance or ODA which accounted for nearly 80% of the “development pie” just 10 years ago relative to private funds and other sources, now represent less than 25% of funds flowing to developing countries. The “Times” they are indeed A’ Changing.

The **NEXT TABLE** highlights some of the recent shifts in information technology and internet communications including:

- Movement away from PC-dominated “information sharing” from fixed platforms towards mobile/wireless platforms and Wikis;
- The migration from “Read only” information towards fully active end-user participation and social networking the likes of U-Tube and Facebook; and

-- The shift from “Expert Knowledge” to more “community-based knowledge” and “end- user experience”.

According to a recent report last month by the Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development -- the OECD -- the next several billion connections to the internet in the developing world are likely to be on mobile/wireless platforms, rather than fixed ones. Already in a number of countries, wireless users out number those on fixed networks by “more than 20 to 1” says the OECD report. So again, as the Dylan song goes, the “Times They are A’ Changing” Indeed.

The rapidly changing landscape of development assistance, such as an explosion in public-private partnership, combined with the fast-paced, user-dominated, social networking focus of today’s internet are some of the driving forces propelling the Global Development Commons. As Administrator Fore has said, the Commons is a:

**"community of continuous and real-time exchange, collaboration, partnership and action between public and private donors, agencies, NGOs, host governments, and civil society – all operating as equals."**

Today’s Forum is the first step to explore ways to further advance the Commons.



*Microsoft  
Unlimited  
Potential*<sup>TM</sup> **UP**

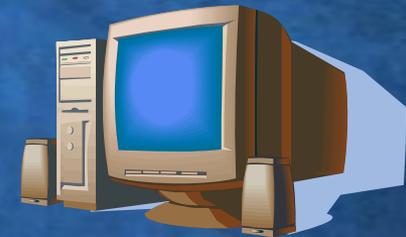
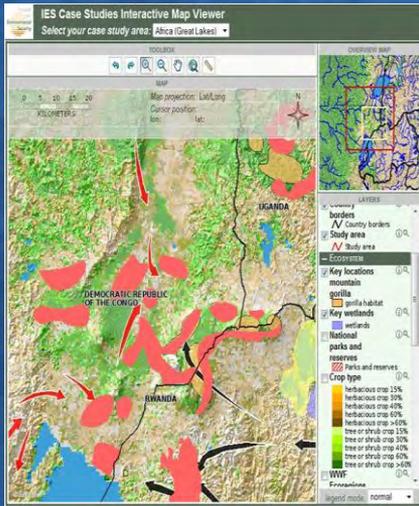
**Corey Griffin**

Director, International Development Aid Agencies  
Microsoft Corporation

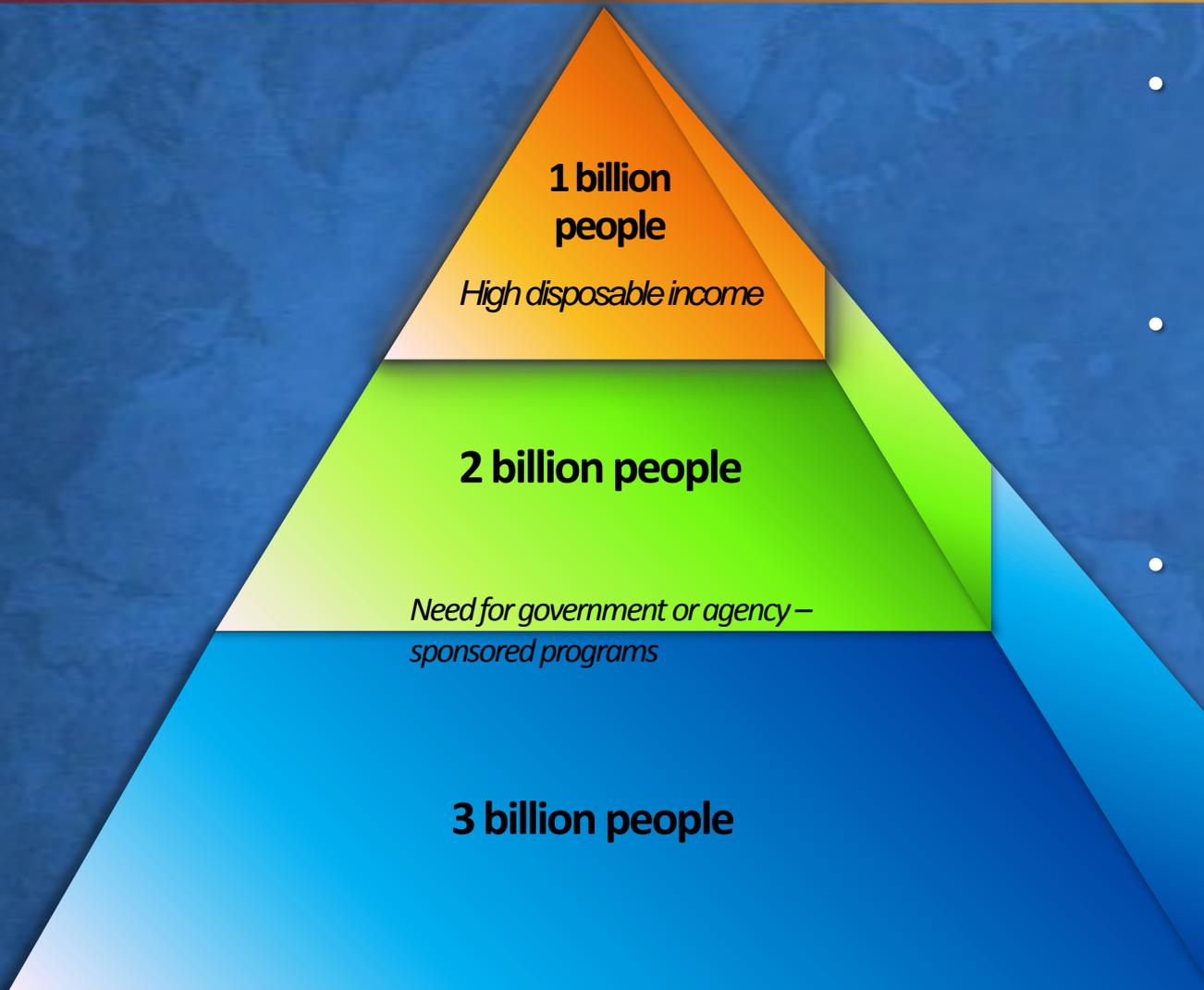
# The Enablers

"It is now possible for more people than ever to collaborate and compete, in real time ...from more different corners of the planet ...than at any previous time in the history of the world " \*

\*Thomas Friedman – The World Is Flat



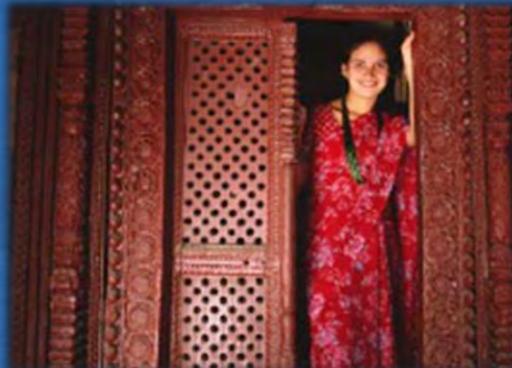
# The Reality



- Provides majority of the income for IT industry
- Business models *defined* for this segment
- Well-understood requirements

# Microsoft Unlimited Potential

*Enable sustained social and economic opportunity for the next five billion people*

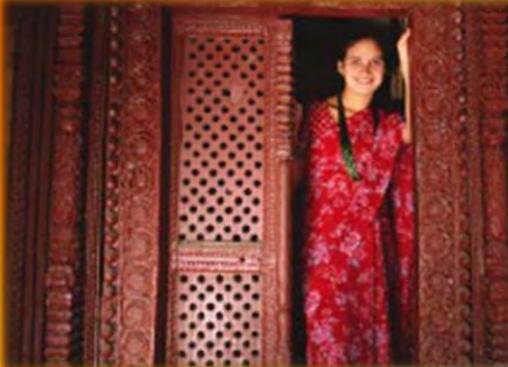


# The Keys To Success

*Relevance*



*Access*



*Affordability*



# Innovating for the Next 5 Billion People

## The Next 5 Billion People



### Requirements

Relevance

Access

Affordability

### Business Models

Ad-funded

Prepaid

Subscription

Shared

Public-Private Partnerships

### Products and Solutions Innovation

#### Programs

- Subscription Computing
- Rural Telecentre Computing
- Partnership for Tech. Access

#### Targeted Solutions

- Student Computing (MSIS, CMPC)
- Family Education PC

#### Services Enablement

- FlexGo
- Windows Live
- Multipoint
- Rural Kiosk
- Steady State

#### Device Enablement

- Low Cost PCs (Windows Starter)
- Refurbished PCs (MAR)
- Mobile Broadband PCs
- Mobile Handsets
- Next Generation USB

# Microsoft Innovation Centers

Fostering  
Local  
Innovation



110 worldwide centers  
Projecting to grow to 200 by 2009

# Community Technology Skills Program

Enabling  
Jobs &  
Opportunities



Programs in 29,000 community technology centers in 102 countries



Remarks by Mark Fleeton, CEO  
Development Gateway Foundation

<http://www.dgfoundation.org/>

USAID Global Development Commons Forum  
Tuesday, November 27, 2007  
Washington, D.C.



## Who We Are

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- Independent World Bank spin-off, launched in 2000
- Based in Washington DC with about 60 staff globally
- FY 07 budget: USD 10 million
- Donors include Australia, China, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Microsoft, Intel, CSIS, Hewlett Foundation and the World Bank
- Development Gateway International based in Brussels



# What We Do

Use information technology to avoid 'reinventing the wheel' in development

Focus on aid and development effectiveness

Two main areas:

- Strengthening key country systems (procurement, financial management, statistics)
- Knowledge sharing

Main audience: Development practitioners



The screenshot shows the Development Gateway website interface. At the top right, there are navigation links: "Contact Us | Donate | Search | Home | Text Only". The main header features the Development Gateway Foundation logo on the left and a large image of a group of people in a classroom setting on the right. Below the logo is a navigation menu with links for "Core Issues", "Programs", "Partners", "News & Events", "About Us", and "Online Resources Portal". The main content area is divided into several sections: "Information Tools. Global Partnerships. Effective Aid." with a sub-headline "Vietnam Introduces Online Government Tenders with dgMarket"; "Effective Government" with the text "Increasing efficiency and transparency in aid management and government procurement. Learn more >>"; "Knowledge and Collaboration" with the text "Bringing aid and development professionals together online to share knowledge and collaborate. Learn more >>"; "Local Partner Programs" with the text "Working with Country Gateways and others in support of local IT for development initiatives. Learn more >>"; and "LATEST HEADLINES" with two entries: "DG Launches Global Prize for ICT and Youth" and "Australia Commits US\$5.5 Million to Development Gateway". At the bottom, there is a "DONORS" section with logos for Australia, Germany, and Italy, and an "ONLINE RESOURCES PORTAL" section with the text "Discover a world of information and expertise for development practitioners". The footer includes the Internet logo.

## What We Do

### Main DGF programs:

- E-procurement: USD 700 billion advertised in 24 languages on dgMarket
- Aid management: Aid Management Platform implemented in 8 countries (Bolivia, Burundi, Burkina Faso, DRC, Ethiopia, Mali, Montenegro and Tanzania)
- Online communities of practice: 29 knowledge-sharing communities with 3 major language initiatives (Arabic, Chinese and French)
- Network of 48 country and regional gateways



# Lessons Learnt

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- Governments are ill-suited to work directly in the GDC
- Be as open as possible. 'Wikipedia' models are best
- Don't over-strategize, but look for strategic opportunities
- Focus or get "lost in space"
- Avoid the "build it and they will come" approach
- Minimize risks and costs through open source software, open standards, and common systems
- Be serious about M&E but realistic about 'outcomes-based' M&E
- Get over the ICT prejudices

# **USAID – Global Development Commons Washington, D.C.**

**Helga Leifsdottir  
ReliefWeb Coordinator  
27 Nov. 2007**

*To strengthen the response capacity of the international humanitarian relief community through the timely dissemination of reliable information*



**Principal Donors:** ECHO,  
Sweden, Norway, Japan, USA  
and the Netherlands

# ReliefWeb

- ▶ **24 hour coverage of natural disasters and complex emergencies**
- ▶ **Humanitarian policies and issues** features the latest debates and resources on humanitarian issues
- ▶ **Professional resources** provide vacancy and training announcements
- ▶ **Map Centre** provides visual product support for emergency responses

## Priorities 2007 - 2009

- ▶ Connecting with field locations
- ▶ Improved analysis of humanitarian issues
- ▶ Staffing capacity
- ▶ A communications strategy
- ▶ System stability
- ▶ Multi-lingual content
- ▶ Information exchange partnerships

24-Hour  
Coverage

18 staff in  
3 duty stations



## MAP CENTRE >>



Mexico: Tabasco and Chiapas Floods (as of 9 Nov 2007)

[See all Maps](#)

## ABOUT RELIEFWEB

ReliefWeb is the global hub for time-critical humanitarian information on Complex Emergencies and Natural Disasters [more >>](#)



United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

## OTHER OCHA SITES

[OCHA Online](#)

[IRIN](#)

[GDACS](#)

[Virtual OSOCC](#)

[RedHum](#)

[Humanitarian Reform](#)

[CERF](#)

[LINDAC](#)

[INSARAG](#)

## COUNTRIES & EMERGENCIES >>

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <a href="#">Afghanistan &gt;&gt;</a>                      | <a href="#">Iraq &gt;&gt;</a>                           |
| <a href="#">Central African Republic &gt;&gt;</a>         | <a href="#">Occupied Palestinian Territory &gt;&gt;</a> |
| <a href="#">Chad &gt;&gt;</a>                             | <a href="#">Somalia &gt;&gt;</a>                        |
| <a href="#">Democratic Republic of the Congo &gt;&gt;</a> | <a href="#">Sudan &gt;&gt;</a>                          |
| <a href="#">Eritrea-Ethiopia &gt;&gt;</a>                 | <a href="#">East Africa Drought &gt;&gt;</a>            |

See all Countries, Emergencies & Natural Disasters:

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## LATEST NATURAL DISASTERS

- [Papua New Guinea: Cyclone Guba - Nov 2007 >>](#)
- [Philippines: Floods and Landslides - Nov 2007 >>](#)
- [Congo: Floods and Landslides - Nov 2007 >>](#)
- [Cyclone Sidr - Nov 2007 >>](#)

[FEEDBACK](#)

[more >>](#)

## APPEALS & FUNDING >>

- [CAP: Dominican Republic Tropical Storm Noel Flash Appeal 2007 >>](#)
- [CAP: 2007 Humanitarian Appeals >>](#)
- [Current Funding Status of Humanitarian Appeals >>](#)
- [By Country/Emergency >>](#)
- [Central Emergency Response Fund \(CERF\) >>](#)
- [UN Foundation CERF Donation Page >>](#)
- [Good Humanitarian Donorship >>](#)
- [Business Contributions to UN Emergency Relief Efforts >>](#)

## POLICY & ISSUES >>

- [Redesigning the ReliefWeb >>](#)
- [Fact Files and Media Tools on HIV/AIDS >>](#)
- [Virtual On-Site Operations Coordination Centre User Guide >>](#)

[more >>](#)

## HEADLINES

- [How to send us information >>](#)
- [OPT: At Annapolis, an opportunity to end the humanitarian stranglehold >>](#)
- [Sudan: ICG report - Darfur's new security reality >>](#)
- [RDC : La MONUC lance un appel urgent aux groupes armés pour qu'ils déposent les armes >>](#)
- [Papua New Guinea floods: Japanese govt provides 13 million yen as emergency aid >>](#)
- [Terremoto en Chile: Restituidos en un 100% servicios básicos en Tocopilla >>](#)
- [Bangladesh: IFRC appeals for USD 22m for cyclone assistance >>](#)

[click to save](#) go to [Latest Updates](#)

## FROM OUR PARTNERS

(These links will take you to external sites.)

- [Launch of PreventionWeb >>](#)
- [Humanitarian Impact of Urbanisation >>](#)
- [UN Geographic Information Working Group - Eighth Plenary Meeting, 28-30 Nov 2007 >>](#)

## SPECIAL FOCUS

- [Global Symposium +5 - Information for Humanitarian Action >>](#)
- [OCHA Annual Report 2006 >>](#)
- [OCHA in 2007: Activities and Extra-budgetary Requirements >>](#)
- [ReliefWeb User Statistics 2006 >>](#)
- [Avian Influenza Resources >>](#)
- [Evaluation of ReliefWeb 2006 >>](#)

<p><b>RELIEFWEB</b> VIA <b>EMAIL</b> Receive daily or weekly updates</p>	<p><b>RELIEFWEB</b> VIA <b>RSS</b> Really Simple Syndication</p>
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## **Key Recommendations**

- **Inter-agency mechanism strengthened**
- **Common humanitarian classification system**
- **Professionalisation of humanitarian info management**

## ReliefWeb Challenges /Lessons Learned

- Focus (definition)
- Trust - Quality
- Authority
- Technology
- Systems (SOPs)
- Policies and principles (consensus)
- Community of practice
- Multilingualism
- Proximity to operations

## Supporting humanitarian action

- Broker of multiple views
- One-stop shop - reduce info overload
- Site structure based on mental models
- 24-hour guarantee
- Self-critical within constraints
- Filling gaps, vacancies
- Make situation graphic (maps, analyses)
- Stimulate thinking around emergencies

- [www.reliefweb.int](http://www.reliefweb.int)
- [www.reliefweb.int/symposium](http://www.reliefweb.int/symposium)

# Global Development Commons Forum

Bill Reese

President

International Youth Foundation

[www.iyfnet.org](http://www.iyfnet.org)

National Press Club

27 November, 2007

# Session Objectives

1. Technology and IYF's global 70+ partners/practitioners
2. Thoughts on working with new Millennial generation
3. Contemplating a Commons: Some cautions and wishes

- \$20-30 million annual budget
- 75+ staff globally
- Global partner network in 70 countries
- Partners work in network or directly with youth
- YouthActionNet: Young changemakers

# Global Partner Network

- Both learners and teachers
- Rich community of practice
- Time/resource starved
- Often language bound
- Regional/theme collaboration
- Pockets of innovation/adoption

# Technology as Asset

- Access (often hard to reach) youth
- Key to work life, lifestyle (employability, healthy lifestyles)
- Key to scale
- Key to innovation, cost reduction, dynamic/organic collaboration
- Best resources are targeted

# Technology as Impediment

- Not a panacea
- Still exclusive/inaccessible to bottom of the pyramid
- Full impact is broadband dependent
- Promise of Web 3.0 not yet realized (content still unfocused, untargeted, inaccessible, poorly organized)

# Millennial Generation Snapshot

- Digital “natives”...live their lives online
- Changing the way global business/politics is done
- Blur lines between business and philanthropy
- Created venture philanthropy/venture philanthropreneurs
- Intolerant of status quo, like shaking things up (mashing)
- Risk takers, invincibility, entrepreneurial
- Believe most problems have a web-based solution
- Solutions often hinge on social networking
- Strong values (environment, community, ethics)
- Engaged global citizens

# GDC Wishes & Cautions

## Wishes:

- Inclusive (including stakeholders & beneficiaries)
- Visual (navigable, organized)
- Targeted (themed)
- Interactive (learn and share)
- Collaborative (open vs. closed)

## Cautions:

- Over-reaching
- Role of U.S. (as convener vs. leader)
- Recreating wheel
- Closed systems
- Timeline and redundancy