

**Millennia2025 Foundation WeObservatory and Global Forum 2016**  
**Concept note of the “Digital Communities” second session**

**Millennia2025 Foundation WeObservatory and the Global Forum in 2015 and 2016**

✓ *Millennia2025 Foundation WeObservatory and the Global Forum have collaborated on the organization of the “Digital Communities” session at GF 2015 in Oulu, Finland.*

<https://weobservatory.com/2015/11/06/global-forum-2015/>

A Global Forum’s session on “Digital Communities” was organized by Millennia2025. The objective was to examine how communities are impacting the digital development, how they are impacting the digital future, how they are defining themselves their own needs—with a focus on women. The agenda included three types presentations centered on three types of questions:

1. How ICT has supported/can support the expansion of access to health and health practices in and from remote areas? How it has helped to be close enough to women communities so to respond to the women needs? (highlighted by a presentation on the Millennia « Zero Mother die » project);
2. How ICT facilitate South–South Cooperation as a broad framework for the collaboration between women from developing countries to exchange resources, technology, and knowledge? (highlighted by a presentation of an “Innovation for Community Development: The Egyptian Experience” monitored by the Egyptian Women Business Development Center) .
3. How ICT has supported/can support a strategy for universal access to information and knowledge, helping to integrate people, in order to create greater participation (highlighted by a presentation on the Information and Communication Technology unit in the Education, Science and Culture Section of the Communication and Information Sector, UNESCO,)

The three presentations were followed by rich discussion between the speakers and participants that raised some unsolved questions and strengths, but also weak aspects of the digital communities which need to be

strengthened for the future of empowered women. This can be summarized as following:

- How to ensure a real South–South Cooperation through a digital community as a broad framework for the collaboration between developing countries to exchange resources, technology, and knowledge?
- How ICT can play their crucial enabler role to build equitable and pluralistic knowledge societies? How to reach people and decrease the inequality in accessing health service and the right to health?
- Do ICT integrate people in order to create greater participation, with the long term goal to provide Universal access to information and knowledge and access to health?
- To what extend is access to ICT being leveraged for improving livelihoods? Is it being used for the empowerment of women or poor people? Where and how ICT can have an impact?

✓ *Millennia2025 WeObservatory organizes a second “Digital Communities” session at Global Forum, Eindhoven, Netherlands, 19-20 September 2016, in order to extend and deepen the dialogue with speakers and participants:.*

In 2016, the Global Forum is organized on « Digitalization: the global transformation - New Practices & Relationships ».

Elements for discussion include:

1. Acknowledging that technology should not be a driver but stay as an enhancing tool, technology should be leveraged where possible with the maximum possible benefits so to be able to build equitable and pluralistic access to knowledge and decision making; What mechanism should be developed to reach such a goal?
2. Millennia members, as a worldwide digital community, are contributing to information technologies. How to make ICT as tools to respond to the vulnerability of women around the world, channeling appropriate information and emphasizing, at the same time, the critical work done at community level?
3. How can ICT increase women’ participation in the design and implementation of education and/or health projects, breaking women

isolation and allowing them to have an informed decision about their health and their attitude?

4. What are the conditions and mechanisms for ICT to be used and facilitate the cooperation with/between the health workers?
5. There is still a long way to go to improve well-being and health with ICTs' support for women, and we need mutual incentives and on-going dialogue between health professionals and ICT experts, keeping in mind to put patient at the center: How to provoke the necessary change of mind set and not only of technology among these professionals and women in developing world
6. What are the content of a joint collaboration, both health professionals and ICT experts, so e-health and m-health can support health improvement in line with the ODD, and not just be an available tool?
7. What is the ethical framework that the implementation of new technologies for health requires to ensure respectful care for the persons and their communities.

The "Digital Communities" session will be organized based on presentations of projects which content will feed the debate around two or three pre-selected questions issued from the 2015 session as indicated above. The conclusions and recommendations will reinforce the 2015 conclusions and help build innovative paths for the future of women and their empowerment. A publication is planned in 2018/2019.