Transform the Digital Divide into Digital Opportunity

International Cooperation Forum

on Telecommunications & Broadcasting

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Where we are now?

Where we should go!

What should be done?

Our challenge: Benefits of ICT for All
WSIS 2003: Declaration of Principles

"Common Vision for an inclusive information society"

- Building an people centered information society
- Information Infrastructure: an essential foundation
- Capacity building: continuous life-long learning
- Building confidence and security in the use of ICTs
- ICT applications: benefits in all aspects of life
- Cultural and linguistic diversity and identity, local contents
- International and regional cooperation

WSIS 2003: Plan of Action
To be achieved by 2015

- **To connect villages with ICT and establish "Community Access Points"**
- To connect universities, schools, research centres, public libraries, cultural centres, health centres and hospitals
- To connect all local governments and establish websites
- To adapt all schools curricula to meet the challenges of IS
- To ensure all people in the world have access to TV/radio
- To encourage the development of content in all languages
- To ensure more then half of the world's inhabitants have access to ICTs within their reach by 2015

WSIS 2005: Tunis Commitment

- **Connecting all communities by 2015**
  (From closing address by Yoshio Utsumi, Secretary General of ITU)

- **Reaffirmed WSIS 2003 Declaration and Plan of Action**

- To build ICT networks and develop applications that are affordable and accessible to all, available anywhere and any time, to anyone and any device, leading to a ubiquitous network.

WSIS 2005: Tunis Agenda

- **Internet Governance: Dialogue continues**
  - ➤ All governments should play equal role and responsibility
  - ➤ Establishment of Internet Governance Forum convened by the UN Secretary General to foster multi-stakeholder dialogue

- **Financial Mechanisms**
  - ➤ Financing of ICT deployment is vial to meet the MDGs
  - ➤ Welcome the establishment of "Digital Solidarity Fund"

- **The way Forward: Follow-up & Implementation**
  - ➤ **UN General Assembly in 2015 will examine the results of global challenges.**

Common Target is:

"Transform the Digital Divide into Digital Opportunity"

Digital Divide Factors

- **Disparity between:**
  - Developed countries and developing countries
  - Urban areas and rural/remote areas
- **Differences caused by: (solutions)**
  - Income   (Measures on Poverty Reduction)
  - Education and job training   (e-Learning, etc.)
  - Race   (Peace Building, Poverty Reduction, etc.)
  - Gender (e-Learning, e-Health, e-Business, etc.)
  - Age   (Barrier Free, Universal Accessibility, etc)
  - Disabilities (Barrier Free, Universal Design, etc.)

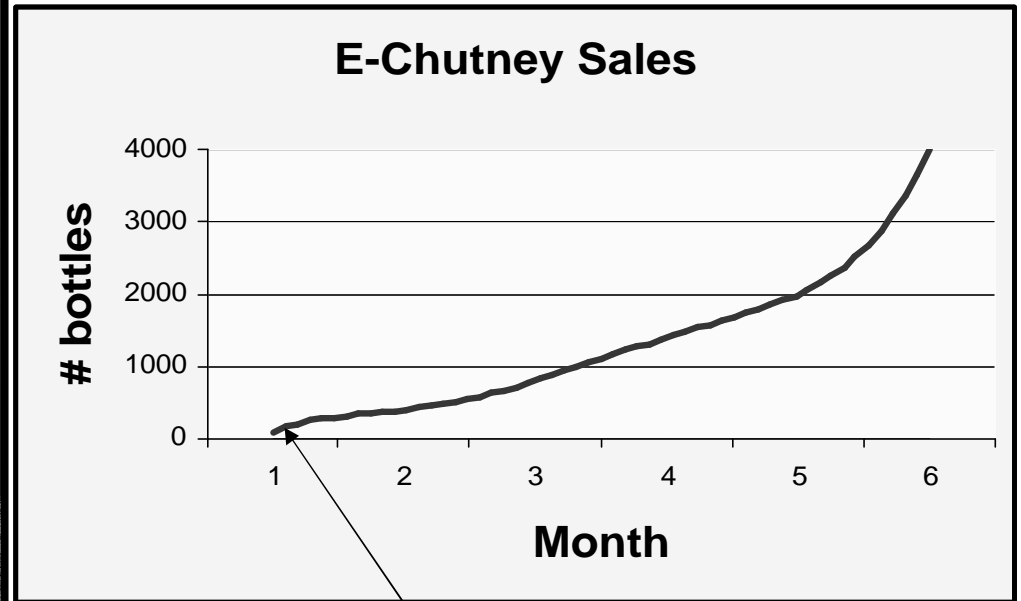# Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women (Item3, MDGs)

Project examples

- e-Chutney in Fiji (Navua Women's Group)
- Community Radio Operation by Women in Fiji and Vanuatu
- Village Phone Program in Bangladesh
- Puskowanjati by Women's Cooperative in East Java, Indonesia

(MDGs: Millennium Development Goals by United Nations)

Navua Women's Rural Group, Fiji
The e-Chutney experience!

E-Chutney Sales

 # bottles vs **Month**

Obtained a computer
with e-mail for marketing

Community Radio: Fiji and Vanuatu

Fiji: **Peace-building**
Gender issues
HIV/AIDS

Vanuatu: **Education**

e-Health Projects
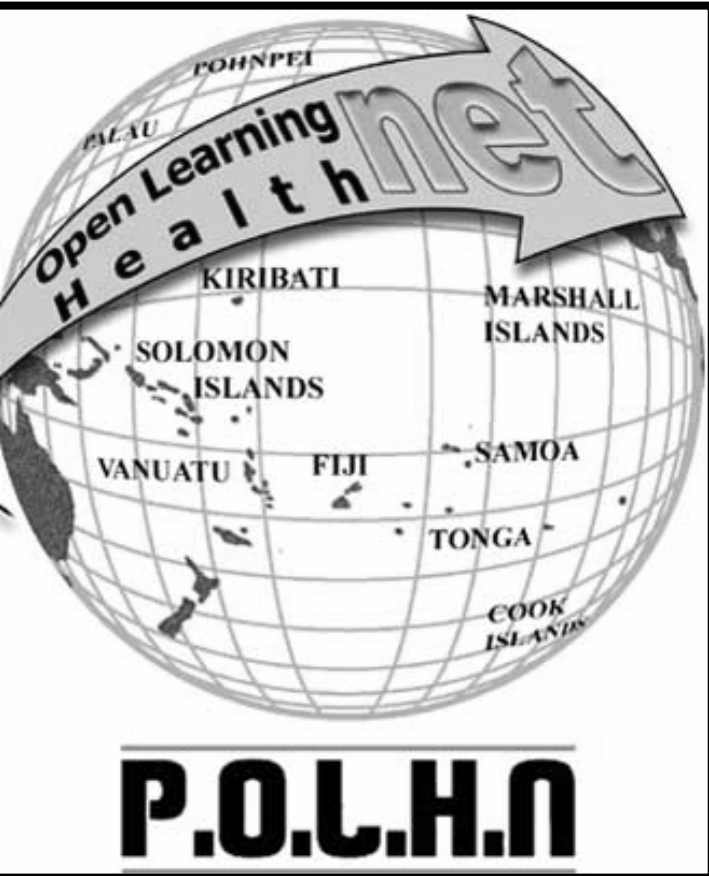
Health care issues include…

- Inadequate health statistics
- Few training opportunities
- Limited health care infrastructure
- Cost of off island transfers: Isolation

Project examples

- Pacific Open Learning Health Net by WHO
- Pacific Association for Clinical Training
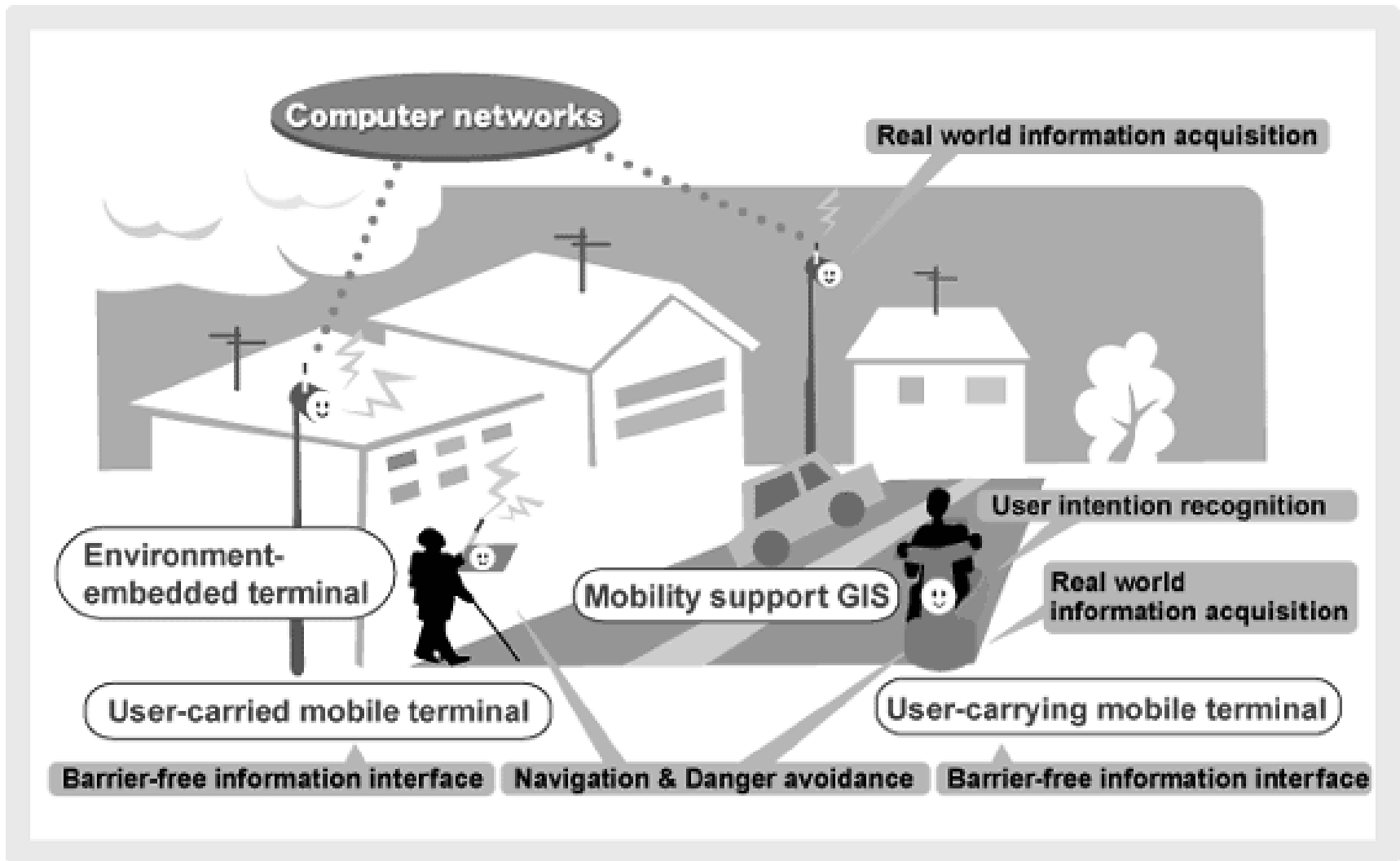
WHO: Pacific Open Learning Health Network

- **Continuing education for health professionals**
- **Telecentres in 10 countries, in major hospital**
- **Expansion into rural areas?**

How to Overcome Disability?

- Information Barrier-free Technology: Sign language recognition and synthesis methods

- Vehicle for the Elderly and the Disabled: Intelligent City Walker (ICW): ICW with sensors and AI technology guide wheelchair

- E-AT (Assistive Technology)

- Activities of related organization

➢ Global Forum on Disability in the Information Society <http://daisy.org

➢ Welfare and Medical Service Agency
  <http://www.wam.go.jp.wam/english/main.html>

Intelligent City Walker: Human-Computer Intelligent Interaction

Computer networks

Real world information acquisition

Environment-embedded terminal

User intention recognition

Mobility support GIS

Real world information acquisition

User-carried mobile terminal

User-carrying mobile terminal

Barrier-free information interface

Navigation & Danger avoidance

Barrier-free information interface

Most Important Problem to be solved
- **Development of Rural Infrastructure -**

- Disparity is becoming larger between ubiquitous network community and no ICT network community as we enter into the Ubiquitous Network Society.

- Huge amount of investment is needed.

- Not attractive for private sector investors because of lack of commercial sustainability.

- There is no simple solution to this problem.

- ITU, UNDP, UNESCO and other aid organizations have been focusing on the development of Multi-purpose Community Telecentre (MCT).

Without Our Continuous Challenge:

The digital divide between urban areas of developed countries and rural areas of developing countries will become

"wider and wider!"

We must expedite and strengthen our actions to bridge the digital divide by developing information infrastructure in rural areas and human capacity building all over the world.

New Challenge

"New initiative of international cooperation should be encouraged"

Benefits of ICT for all !

Panel Discussion: Transform the Digital Divide into Digital Opportunity

- **Establishment of Policy for Project Formation and Implementation**

 By Mr. Manabu Kanaya, Director for International Cooperation Division, MIC

- **Development of Rural Information Infrastructure**

 By Mr. Yuki Umezawa, Senior Manager, International Cooperation Section, KDDI

 By Mr. Shuso Miura, Manager, Solution Business Division, Japan Radio Co., Ltd

- **Human Capacity Building: Education and Training for People at all Levels**

 By Dr. Esther W. B. Williams, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, The University of the South Pacific