



UNESCO Future Forum “Exploring the Dynamics of Knowledge Societies: Using the Future to Shape Transformative Policies”

Organized in line with the WSIS + 10 Review Meeting
9:30 to 13:00 -- 27 February 2013
UNESCO Headquarters, Room XI

Almost a decade has gone by since UNESCO’s seminal publication on Knowledge Societies signaled the importance of moving beyond limited information society models of the future. In 2005 it was already apparent that both culture, as a wellspring of innovation, and learning, as a key source of value, meant that Knowledge Societies were more about education, research, diversity and access than about bandwidth and hardware. Now, the world is even more connected and technology more powerful than ever, but what of innovation, learning, science, diversity and access? These are dynamic areas of human endeavor, sources of content and interaction, but like all dynamic processes part of the challenge is to grasp the novel and emergent.

Indeed one of the important conclusions in recent years has been the inadequacy of the frameworks and variables used to understand and measure knowledge creation and use. Humanity’s capacity to define and track the stocks and flows of knowledge, to perceive both different kinds of knowledge and the vast range of processes that give rise to knowing – all essential infrastructure for any kind of knowledge society – remain largely obscured by yesterday’s industrial society institutions, models and data. As a result it is quite difficult to assess the dynamics of knowledge societies today and even more difficult to offer rigorous and inventive futures that might inspire new strategic thinking.

The aim of this Future Forum is to use the latest thinking about knowledge societies, including the frameworks that enable rigorous definitions of the changing nature of knowledge stocks, flows and processes, so as to produce up-to-date images of future of knowledge societies. By improving the quality of the images used to describe tomorrow’s knowledge societies this Future Forum will sharpen the recommendations for enabling transformative, post-industrial knowledge societies today. In particular the discussions will focus on the relationship between new forms and processes for generating knowledge (content) and the institutional conditions at local, regional and global levels. At the forefront in this Forum will be the special role of UN agencies and international governance systems in establishing the transparency, trust, access, and open connectivity needed to make good on the promise of knowledge societies.

Today, as in 2003 with the first World Information Society Summit, there are high hopes that the emergence of knowledge societies will contribute to creating a more sustainable, equitable and peaceful world for all. WSIS +10 provides an opportunity to make a major contribution to the policies that enable these more dynamic knowledge societies. This Future Forum will contribute by highlighting the key transformative policy areas and initiatives that decision makers from around the world need to address.

The UNESCO Future Forum and Future Lecture series bring people together to use the future to understand the present. Conceived as a contribution to a global debate on key challenges of our time, these sessions are organized around collective intelligence and anticipatory thinking to create new knowledge.

AGENDA

9:30

Opening remarks by Hans d'Orville, Assistant Director-General for Strategic Planning

Session 1

Globalization, Creativity and Knowledge Creation?

9:40 – 11:00

Reframing the Knowledge Society

Keynote:

Pankaj Ghemawat

Discussants:

Ana Carla Fonseca

Stefaan Verhulst

Panel discussion and interaction with the floor

11:00 – 11:20

Coffee break

Session 2

Changes in the Conditions of Change? A Discussion of the Conditions for Network

11:20 – 12:50

Birth, Death, Entry and Exit

Keynote

Don Tapscott

Discussants

Nicolas Colin

Izumi Aizu

Mihaela Ulieru

Panel discussion and interaction with the floor

12:50 – 1:00

Summary and closing

Moderator:

Riel Miller, Chief of the Foresight Section