

XXII INFOPOVERTY WORLD CONFERENCE

The Digital Citizen: duties and rights to build a fairer future Society

PRESS RELEASE

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“The Digital Citizen: duties and rights to build a fairer future Society”

In its 22nd Edition, the Infopoverity World Conference presented the most innovative strategies to address Digital Citizenship as well as the rights and duties of the new Digital Citizen at the United Nations Headquarters in New York

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New York, 1 December 2022 – On the path traced by a ventennial experience and practical expertise, the 22nd Infopoverity World Conference opened the works for a shared *Plan of Action* to be presented at the United Nations addressing the opportunities and the challenges of Digital Citizenship. With the aim of reaching a fairer, more sustainable and inclusive Society inspired by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – the orientating compass to be adopted universally – the contributions by the eminent speakers encompassed some possible options to empower the protagonist of the change in progress in all her

associative dynamics. In this context, the three sessions of the discussion gathered insights on many topics and urgent matters to be addressed. Among others, particular attention was devoted to: the necessity to bridge the digital divide that is still existent in many regions of the world; the need of multilateralism to *faire face* to the many and heterogeneous challenges posed by current crises; how sustainable urbanization together with rapid urbanization and its impact on global warming and the natural environment, from poverty to inequality to public health, highlights the role of information, communication, technology in providing solutions; the urge to direct artificial intelligence, its algorithms and platforms towards a universal e-welfare embracing all categories of Civil Society; the role of e-services – food-security, e-education, e-governance and telemedicine – in advancing solutions tailored to local, regional, national and international needs; and the importance of culture as a medium to reach wider audiences and explore new narratives in an unconventional way.

In doing so, the 22nd Infopoverity World Conference presented concrete applications of past and undergoing projects calling all interested stakeholders to intervene and inspire new strategies and ways of thinking and doing to emerge and be adopted. The **ICT Village Model** and the experience on the field in Sambaina, Madagascar, was brought as a best practice to be renovated and supported not only in international fora with complementary experience (i.e. Smart Villages by ITU and UN Habitat), but also concretely with financial, technological and



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social resources. Representatives from the **EWA-BELT Project**, funded by the European Commission under the Horizon2020 Programme (GA 862648), presented the most innovative technologies generated so far within the Consortium in the agricultural field: remote PLANT HEAlth Diagnostic (PLANTHEAD) network in Eastern and Western Africa to be extended further, real-time decision support systems for better silo management of stored commodities, and molecular analyses with qPCR. Finally, eminent doctors and experts of the field brought to the table their successful experience with **telemedicine** and the urgent need to expand it beyond the current limited scope to reach all rural and small village communities in remote and disadvantage areas of the globe.

Although the main undergoing trends and possible solutions and implementations have been identified and collected by the eminent speakers, a lot remains to be done. Rather than being dismissed as a utopian paradigm, a **codex** capable of harmonizing the entire new virtual world while simultaneously enforcing human rights protection, bringing all stakeholders together (*entrepreneurial, financial, governmental, and social forces*) toward common objectives, empowering digital citizenship through universal active social participation and tackling waste and abuses to the planet and the people, can, and should, be generated.

“This is our last chance to build a fairer society or fall into irreversible automatisms”

On these premises, the *Plan of Action* will encompass all the opportunities and challenges posed by all the nuances of the Digital Revolution and define a roadmap to be adopted by policymakers, international organizations, businesses and Civil Society for a fairer, more inclusive and sustainable society to emerge where the Digital Citizen truly becomes an active member of an ethical and SDGs-inspired community.