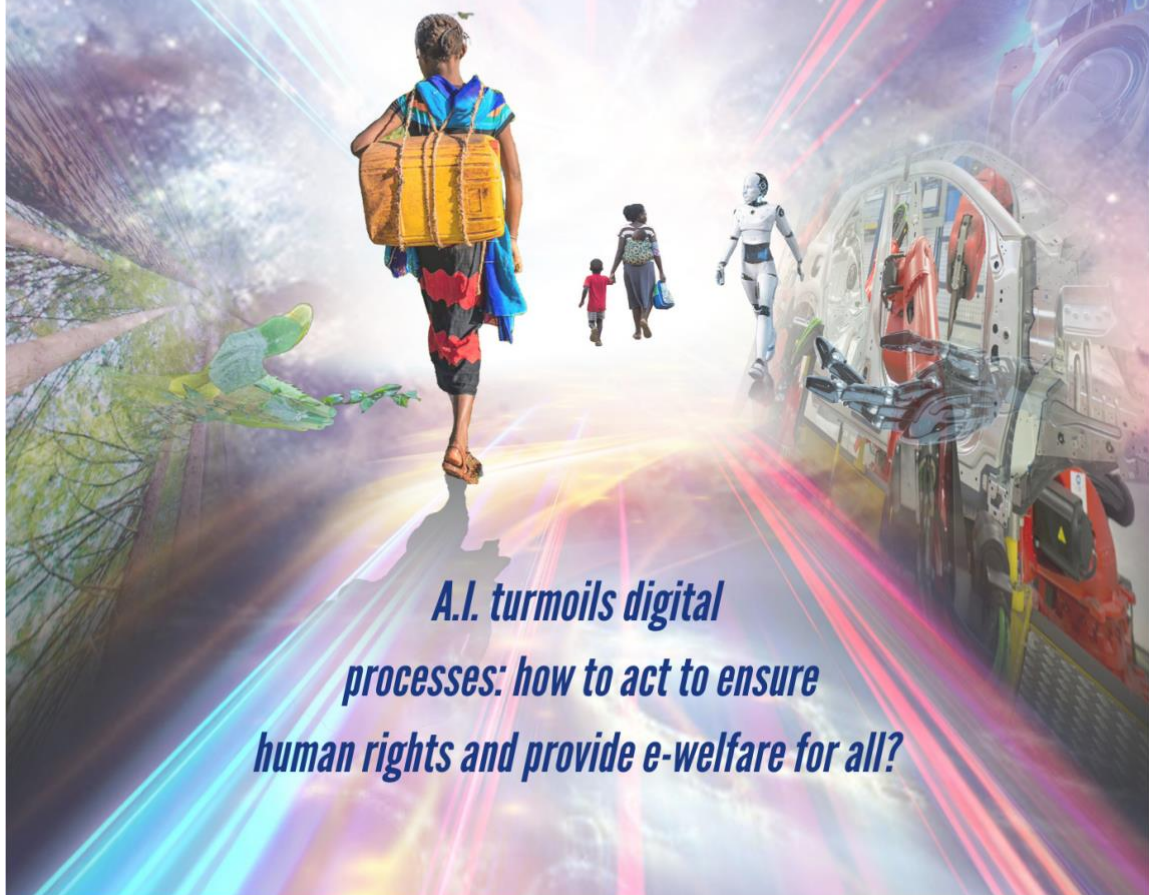




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# XXIII INFOPOVERTY WORLD CONFERENCE



*A.I. turmoils digital processes: how to act to ensure human rights and provide e-welfare for all?*



Ministero degli Affari Esteri  
e della Cooperazione Internazionale



**April 2024**

## PRESENTATION

Amidst the COVID-19 pandemic and the harrowing realities of ongoing wars, a new perception of Society has surfaced. This newfound awareness has been further altered by the advent of AI, fundamentally reshaping our outlook on the imminent future, amplifying concerns and uncertainties surrounding a digitally dominated world.

Operating since the dawn of the digital revolution, the Infopoverty World Conference has punctually chronicled the pivotal junctures of this era. Its focus remains on spotlighting commendable projects and practices that merit the attention of the United Nations system, under whose auspices it was established, with the mission of promoting the achievement of the MDGs and SDGs through the strategic utilization of ICTs and new technologies.

A fresh chapter is unfolding, propelled by a cohort of digital natives and the pervasive integration of new technologies shaping the very essence of progress. Within this landscape, tackling the diverse array of new and sometimes unethical occurrences—largely driven by private entities wielding control over infrastructure and operational platforms—has ascended to paramount significance. Delaying the resolution of these issues is no longer tenable.

The proclaimed SDGs have paved the way for development as a guiding compass. Now, substantial technical, social, political, and economic endeavors are imperative, especially directed towards marginalized communities, to allocate significant resources into AI-driven e-services to surmount the deficiencies and challenges in telecommunication infrastructure, e-learning, food security, telemedicine, and e-governance. ICTs and AI stand as viable and potent solutions to contemporary challenges, provided they are ethically tested and applied to address the essential requirements of people. This, in turn, mandates their integration into foundational global action plans and policies.

*How should we steer the impetus of AI to orient it towards overcoming of inequalities, climate emergencies, and challenging instances?*

*How to address the paradoxical binomial between digital excellence and its diverted use, it being at the basis of a struggling achievement of the SDGs putting the protection of human rights on the back burner?*

*How to attest that ICTs and AI serve as effective responses to contemporary challenges only if they undergo ethical examination and prone to human needs?*

On these premises, drawing from the results elaborated in the past Final Declarations, addressing the topic “AI turmoils digital processes: how to act to ensure human rights and provide e-welfare for all?”, the 23<sup>rd</sup> Infopoverty World Conference will convene as a think-tank, gathering distinguished experts to showcase pioneering projects aimed at achieving the UN 2030 Agenda and beyond.

To do so, the conference will first draft the map of asynchronism to draw knowledge-sharing policies allowing economic, political and technological fences to be overcome, to later focus on *e-welfare4all* and the critical gaps to be covered to attain it, namely food-security, health and education to launch an appeal for investments on best practices to lead the transition towards an ethical, sustainable and SDGs inspired digital Society leaving no one behind.

## PREPARATORY MEETINGS

### **VI International Medical Informatics and Telemedicine meeting**

*February 28, 2023*

OCCAM participated in the VI International Medical Informatics and Telemedicine meeting took place on February 28, 2023, on the first anniversary of the conflict outbreak in Ukraine and three years after the first case of Covid 19 contagion was discovered in Europe. The webinar aimed at promoting the role of telemedicine in supporting peace, by underlining the potential of IT infrastructure, remote education, and food and water access programs to help relieve suffering, promote justice and provide highly impactful healthcare worldwide, especially in underserved and high-risk locations where it is needed the most. The President of OCCAM, Arch. Pierpaolo Saporito, recalled the relevance of telemedicine as an effective and efficient means warning about the necessity of improving telemedicine tools, especially those related to diagnosis at a distance and medical and pharmaceutical monitoring to benefit Civil Society. To do so, a global alliance must be urgently established equip countries and communities with telemedicine plans for emergencies and crises.

### **UNCTAD 26<sup>th</sup> Commission on Science and Technology for Development**

*March 27/31 2023, UN Headquarters, Geneva*

From March 27 to March 31, as Regular Observer to the UNCTAD CSTD, OCCAM – the Observatory on Digital Communication, was invited to participate and intervene at the UNCTAD 26<sup>th</sup> edition of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development held at the Palais des Nations of the United Nations Office in Geneva. Arch. Pierpaolo Saporito, President of OCCAM and the Infopoverty Programme, had the opportunity to present the follow-up of the XXII Infopoverty World Conference “*The Digital Citizen: duties and rights to build a fairer future Society*”, held the past 1<sup>st</sup> December at the UNHQ in New York and streamed on the UN Webcast, whose inputs and contributions were collected into the Final Declaration to launch the XXIII edition of the Conference addressing the advent of AI in the digital processes. It is in this context that OCCAM announced the Golden Algorithm Award, first launched in December during the discussion by the eminent participants, endorsed and validated by the Commission to identify and promote the most innovative digital solutions that are ethical and that ensure human rights in line with the common good established by the principles of the UN Charter.

### **5<sup>th</sup> African Union – European Union Agriculture Ministerial Conference**

*June 30, 2023, FAO Headquarters, Rome*

As partner of the EWABELT Project (GA 862848 – H2020), OCCAM observed the efforts of the Conference to present the remarkable achievements and policy recommendations of five funded projects under the Horizon 2020 program's "Sustainable Intensification in Africa (SFS-35-2019-2020)" topic. By generating holistic evidence, promoting technology adoption, aligning soil information systems, and integrating agroecological practices, these projects have spearheaded a movement toward sustainable and resilient agricultural systems. Based on this evidence and activities that demonstrate the benefits of agroecological innovations on the ground, recommendations were presented and met with great enthusiasm and support from attendees at the conference. The outcomes from this collaboration provide a strong foundation for future advancements in African

agriculture, contributing to increased agricultural production, enhanced agri-food system resilience, and environmental sustainability in the years to come.

**XXV Euromediterranean Conference on Cinema**  
***“Platforms and AI: the rise of global cinema?”***

*September 8, 2023, 80. Venice Film Festival, Vilal degli Autori Lido di Venezia*

As partner of CICT ICFT, OCCAM organized and took part in the XXV Euromediterranean Conference on Cinema that explored the potential – and related challenges – of AI tools and platforms in shaping the cinematic landscape – and others – while ensuring that human creativity and expertise remain at the core of the filmmaking industry and creators, to enrich cultural diversity and exchange cultural expressions. The Final Declaration of the Conference was submitted to UNESCO for the records and operates as reference point for a controversial and complicated topic that necessarily requires a reflection and dialogue at the highest institutional, political and social levels with the involvement of experts and professionals from the film, artistic and cultural fields as well as Civil Society in view of operative synergies in all sectors.

**UNESCO High-level discussion on AI in the audio-visual industry**  
***Film sector on the frontlines***

*October 19, 2023, UNESCO Headquarters, Paris*

As member of CICT ICFT, OCCAM assisted to the global conversation organized by UNESCO on the impact of AI on the audio-visual sector. The meeting, in a hybrid format, brought together over a hundred people at UNESCO, including ambassadors, delegations, international organizations, National Commissions, NGOs and experts. Many concerns were expressed, particularly about the rapid development of AI, but some positive previews emerged as well including transparency and regulation. The meeting therefore "set the scene" and raised some very important issues that now need to be looked at in greater depth - and quickly. This is UNESCO's objective with the approach taken, and it should be emphasized that cross-sectoral, cross-functional work needs to be carried out.

## PRELIMINARY AGENDA

*Drawing from the insights elaborated in the past Final Declarations, the 23<sup>rd</sup> Infopoverty World Conference intends to respond to some of the main challenges that emerged amidst the controversial advent of Artificial Intelligence in our Society. In doing so, the discussion will delve into how such innovative tools can be used as efficient and adequate means to provide e-welfare for eradication poverty, assure health for all, as well as adequate education, ending hunger and accelerate the achievement of the SDGs.*

### **10:00 am (NYT) Opening Session**

#### **Institutional Greetings**

**H.E. MAURIZIO MASSARI**, *Permanent Representative of Italy to the United Nations*

**NAVID HANIF**, *Assistant Secretary-General, UN Economic Development in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), Pakistan*

**ERNESTO OTTONE R.**, *Assistant Director-General Culture Sector, UNESCO, France*

**H.E. ALBERTO BARACHINI**, *Undersecretary of State, Presidency of the Council of Ministers, Italy*

#### *General Introduction*

**PIERPAOLO SAPORITO**, *President, OCCAM and Infopoverty Program, Italy*

### **10:30 am (NYT) – First Session**

#### **How could a holistic approach based on AI be functional to SDGs achievement?**

*AI presents both risks and opportunities for human well-being. While it holds promise for societal progress and poverty alleviation, its predominant use in warfare and surveillance poses concerns. To prevent past catastrophic outcomes, AI-powered technologies should pivot toward socially beneficial applications, addressing global societal needs, especially for marginalized communities. Ethical testing and application are pivotal for ICTs and AI to effectively address contemporary challenges and meet fundamental human needs. Stakeholders and scientists' collaboration with governmental representatives are crucial to integrate these tools into global policies, aiming for universal e-welfare.*

Chair: **PATRIZIO CIVILI**, *Special Advisor to the Director General, IDLO; Former UN Assistant Secretary General, Italy*

**HOSSAM BADRAWI**, *Chairman, Nile Badrawi Foundation for Education & Development, Egypt*

**DANIELA RONDINELLI**, *Member, European Parliament*

**BELINDA BISCOE**, *Senior Associate Vice President, The University of Oklahoma, USA*

**NICCOLÒ RINALDI**, *Head of Unit Asia, Australia and New Zealand, European Parliament, Italy*

**REMY SIETCHIPING**, *Chief, Policy, Legislation and Governance Section, UN-Habitat, Kenya*

**LIBERATO BAUTISTA**, *President, CoNGO, the Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations, The Philippines*

**11:30 am (NYT) – Second Session**

**Poverty eradication and hunger: a first challenging priority for AI**

*With poverty levels expanding across the globe, raising concerns about a potential recurrence of the 1929 crisis – stemmed from oversaturated production and a shortage of buyers – must be addressed. It thus becomes imperative to craft comprehensive policies aimed at fostering development among the most impoverished populations. The conference's historical mission lies in highlighting exemplary practices, such as the EU H2020 EWABELT Project (GA 862848) that, executed across villages in 30 sub-Saharan regions by 20 partners among universities, research centers and businesses, showcases how the integration of AI-empowered digital technologies into agriculture fosters tangible development within Africa's most underserved communities. This approach mirrors the successful model of ICT Villages, endorsed by the WSIS since 2005, concurrently addressing the migration phenomenon.*

Chair: **MELCHIADE BUKURU**, *Former Director, UNCCD Liaison Office in New York*

**GUANGZHOU QU**, *Director, FAO Liaison Office in New York, USA*

**GIOVANNA SEDDAIU**, *Professor in Agronomics and EWA-BELT Project Coordinator, Università di Sassari, Desertification Research Centre, Italy*

**YOUSSEF BRAHIMI**, *Member of the EWABELT Scientific Advisory Board, Founding member of the Sahara and Sahel Observatory (OSS), France*

**FRANÇOIS TAPSOBA**, *Member of the EWABELT Scientific Advisory Board, Burkina Faso*

*PlantHead Platform in action from villages in Kenya and Ethiopia*

operated by **OCCAM** (Giovanni Zanoni & Martina Baldessin), Italy

*Lab testing of qPCR device for DNA detection*

by **STMicroelectronics** (Marco Cereda, *Researcher*) with University of Sassari (Quirico Migheli, *Director NRD*) and University of Nairobi (Abigael Ouko, *Lecturer*)

*Focus on biopesticides: Cassia Nigricans study case in Burkina Faso*

**NICOLA MORGANTI**, *President, ACRA Foundation, Italy*

*Neglected Underutilized Crop Species (NUS): the case of Fonio value chain in Ghana*

**JOHN BIDZAKIN**, *Research Fellow, Cranfield University, UK*

**12:45 pm (NYT) – Special event**

**ICFT CICT/UNESCO with 18<sup>th</sup> UNAFF Traveling Film Festival and Signs of Change FF**  
*present the documentary*

**LIGHT** (Kenya/US), *by Nicole Watson, Beryl Omondi*

Introduced by **JASMINA BOJIC**, *Founder and Executive Director, UNAFF & UNAFF Traveling Film Festival, Stanford University (USA)*

**2:15 pm (NYT) – Third Session**

**Good health and well-being (SDG3) – what role could AI play in telemedicine practices?**

*Telemedicine's progress plays a crucial part in improving healthcare access. By setting up strong new practices and enhancing digital healthcare platforms, a great mass of people living in underserved regions can be assisted. At the same time, governmental efforts are due to build efficient e-health systems for all, integrating existing hospitals with territorial points of care. Global health system in crisis: the role of telemedicine in assuring basic services to all.*

Chair: **CLAUDIO AZZOLINI MD**, *Founder of Eumeda Telemedicine Platform, AS, Insubria University, Varese-Como, Italy*

**FRANCESCO OGGIONI ITS**, *Advisory Board Member*, CDAOS.cat non-profit Data & Digital Health Innovation, Barcelona, Spain

**SIMONE DONATI MD**, *Associate Professor*, Department of Medicine and Surgery, Insubria University, Varese-Como, Italy

**ANTONY CAPONE JR MD FACS**, *Associated Retinal Consultants*, Royal Oak, Michigan, USA

**CLAUDE BOSCHER MD**, *Former Surgeon of the Pôle Tête et Cou*, Hôpital Américain de Paris, Neuilly sur Seine, France

**ANAT LOEWENSTEIN MD, MHA**, *Professor and Director*, Division of Ophthalmology, Tel Aviv University, Israel

**UMBERTO PAOLUCCI MEng**, *Up Invest Srl; Former President*, Microsoft Europe, Middle East and Africa, Milan, Italy

**3:15 pm (NYT) – Special event**

**New AI approach to mental health and substance abuse**

*by the Christopher Smithers Foundation, USA*

**BRINKLEY SMITHERS**, *Vice-President*, The Christopher Smithers' Foundation

**3:45 pm (NYT) – Fourth session**

**Urban-Rural linkages to promote sustainable development and clean energy of urban and rural communities**

*The reciprocal and repetitive flow of people, goods, finances, and environmental services between rural, peri-urban, and urban areas creates interdependence as well as imbalances. Urban areas gather resources and people, while rural villages often suffer from climate vulnerabilities and outdated technologies. The Digital Revolution provides guidelines for implementing clean energy solutions to preserve the environment with cohesive development policies across national, regional, and local levels to address these disparities and foster successful, uniform progress.*

Chair: **ALIYE P. CELIK**, *Chair of the Board*, Consortium for Sustainable Urbanization (CSU), USA

**LANCE JAY BROWN**, *Founder*, Consortium for Sustainable Urbanization (CSU), USA

**FRANCESCA DE FERRARI**, *Programme Management Officer*, UN-HABITAT New York, USA

*The Hydrogen Revolution in Housing*

**ANDREA ALESSANDRO GIACOMINI**, *CEO & Head of Public Affairs*, Giacomini Spa, Italy

**MARIAMA SAMAKE**, *Communication & Institutional Relations*, Giacomini Spa, Italy

**GUIDO GALLIANI**, *Technical Development with R&D* Giacomini, Italy

**EMMANUEL AMOS**, *Founder*, Programos Foundation, Nigeria

*UN Millennium Village of Sambaina, Madagascar*

**RAVELOMANANTSOA ODON BERTRAND**, *Mayor*, Municipality of Sambaina, Madagascar

**4:30 pm (NYT) – Fifth session**

**Using Balanced Human and Artificial Intelligence Strategies to bridge the existing gaps: education, gender equality and poverty eradication to guarantee human rights**

*Human and social development relies on the assurance of human rights, including education and the promotion of gender equality, them serving as catalysts for progress in all spheres. In this context, AI and digital technologies hold significant potential to contribute to bridging the existing gaps. Learning from the protagonists of change could highlight new paths and guidelines to be adopted.*

Chair: **PETER A. PSARAS**, *Founder Chios Capital, Chief Strategy Officer & Managing Director Global Futures Group LLC, Advisory Council International Science Reserve ISR, New York Academy of Sciences NYAS, USA*

**HON. JERRY M. HULTIN**, *Former Under Secretary of Navy, President Emeritus New York University Tandon School of Engineering, USA*

**BELINDA BISCOE**, *Senior Associate Vice President, The University of Oklahoma, USA*

**JEFFRY WILLIAMS**, *Founder & CEO, Worldwide Tech Connections, USA*

**ESTHER WOJCICKI**, *Founder, Global Moonshots in Education, Founder Palo Alto High Media Arts Program, CEO Woj.Education, USA*

**NADAIT GEBREMEDHEN MD**, *Founder & Executive Director, Hagush, USA*

**KIYOSHI NAKANISHI**, *CEO, Japan Medical Device Corporation, USA*

**5:15 pm (NYT) – Sixth session**

**Creative feedback on AI innovative solutions for the Plan of Action 2024-2027**

*With AI, all the various factors of change will converge in a holistic system capable of overcoming the sectorization of science through an epistemological approach; clean energy, climate change, waste management, circular economy, wide connective, new algorithms inspired by Pi, are all instances that could bring a harmonious connubium of creativities, traditional knowledge and cutting-edge technologies to face crises of war and poverty, emphasizing the responsibility of each single person involved.*

Chair: **PIERPAOLO SAPORITO**, *President, OCCAM and Infopoverty Programme*

**JOHN STEFFENS**, *Assistant Vice President Emeritus, University of Oklahoma, USA*

**DAVID NEELY**, *President and CEO, Affecting Change International (ACI), USA*

**GIACOMO MAZZONE**, *Secretary-General, EUROVISIONI, Italy*

**ALDO TORREGIANI**, *High-Level Advisor for Sustainable Policies, Italy*

*Poetry on AI*

**IMTIAZ DHARKER**, *Poet, Chancellor, Newcastle University, UK*

**GENERAL DISCUSSION**

**6:00 pm**  
**FINAL DECLARATION**



## HISTORY of the CONFERENCE

The first [Infopoverty World Conference](#) was organized by OCCAM in June 2001, on the momentum of the signature of the Millennium Declaration of the United Nations, where the joining States were committed to the achievement of the eight Millennium Development Goals. The Conference represents, for its continuity, operational capability and strong interoperability with the UN System, a unique global forum, gathering leading experts, academics, opinion leaders, managers, government officials and philanthropists. Working in collaboration with the European Parliament Liaison Office, various UN bodies, the C. Smithers Foundation and other scientific and academic institutions, the Infopoverty World Conference rallies leaders worldwide to operate for the realization of the ICT4D tasks. Throughout the years, the Conference has continuously addressed the advancements brought about by the Digital Revolution and has progressively discovered and launched best practice models in the fields of telemedicine, e-learning, e-agriculture, and e-finance, followed by their successful implementation in many African and Latin American remote villages and disadvantaged communities.



## 20 YEARS OF DIGITAL REVOLUTION IN THE WORDS OF ITS PROTAGONISTS



The [e-Book](#), edited by OCCAM, is a precise synthesis of each year's conference, with posters, agendas, main contributions, and final declarations. The work represents a helpful and significant synthesis of the cooperation's experience between the United Nations and OCCAM.

This Book constitutes a unique point of reference for the digital revolution since 2000, discussing the increasing flow of innovations, with an evaluation in terms of capacity to accelerate the achievements of MDGs and SDGs with concrete ICT solutions experimented on the ground in the ICT Villages, in synergy with more than two thousand high-level speakers, expressing the mood of these crucial twenty-one years.

## INFOPOVERTY PROGRAMME

To realize the suggestions emerging from the discussion, the **Infopoverity Programme** was established to concretely help the poorest and most disadvantaged populations in the developing world through the use of ICTs. The Infopoverity Programme operates as the executive arm of the deliberations of the Infopoverity World Conferences stated in the final declarations drafted at the end of each Conference. It puts into practice the guidelines issued by the Conference through the creation of the ICT Village Model. Such a model follows a process of flexible intervention easily replicable in many areas of the globe and provides various services designed to promote endogenous and sustainable development processes. *Find out more on [occam.org/infopoverity-programme](http://occam.org/infopoverity-programme)*



## ICT Villages

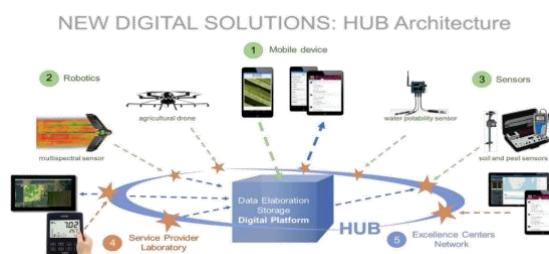


The ICT Village Model follows a process of intervention flexible and easily replicable in many areas of the globe, providing various services designed to promote endogenous and sustainable development process. The first ICT village project was carried out in 1999 in Honduras hit by the devastating hurricane Mitch. Thanks to the use of solar panels, the supply of electricity was guaranteed. A connection to 108 mb/sec for more than 30,000 people, a real record for the time, enabled the creation of the first e-learning and telemedicine services, allowing the population to use

these new technologies advantageously and to connect to the rest of the world through e-commerce and e-government initiatives. *Find out more on [occam.org/infopoverity-programme](http://occam.org/infopoverity-programme)*

## The World Food Security e-Center

The World Food Security e-Center (WFSeC) aims to provide digital services to support agricultural development and food security, transferring technologies and knowledge from the excellent network of Italian universities and laboratories directly to populations and communities in need through a high connectivity digital Platform, using new sensors and robotic devices able to collect and receive data. The project was presented on the occasion of EXPO Milano 2015 and took its legacy in the following years to put into concrete action its core principles. *Find out more on [occam.org/e-services](http://occam.org/e-services).*



## EWABELT PROJECT

The most relevant and effective implementation of the WFSeC is EWA-BELT, an EU Horizon2020 project (GA 862848) aimed at developing the sustainable intensification of agriculture productions in organic, agroforestry and mixed crop and livestock farming systems in 38 study areas of 6 countries belonging to East (Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania) and West (Burkina Faso, Ghana, Sierra Leone) Africa. It is coordinated by the University of Sassari (Italy) and carried out by a consortium of 20 partners from Europe and Africa. Through integrated participative research, innovative tools and identification and dissemination of best practices, all countries will be linked into an interregional East-West African BELT able to reinforce sustainable intensification in agriculture. The Internet of Things and e-Agriculture in EWA-BELT will be managed through the PLANTHEAD platform. The Platform will also allow for the creation of a database for scientific research and possibly for the use of an Artificial Intelligence for phytopathogenic recognition and diagnostics. Furthermore, taking stock from the World Food Security e-Centre, the project is introducing other highly innovative cost-affordable technologies, to be easily used in the field by unskilled personnel. Technical benefits provided by all implemented techniques are evaluated for their environmental, social, and economic effect on farmers and along the value chain. Finally, EWA-BELT addresses gender issues and women empowerment at every stage of the process. To maximize its impact, project results are disseminated yearly during the Infopoverity World Conference. **Find out more on [ewabelt.eu](http://ewabelt.eu).**



## eMedMed



eMedMed is a project born in the context of the Union for the Mediterranean. It aims to bring an innovative and efficient diffusion of health services in Tunisia, Morocco, Libya, and Egypt through telemedicine. It is the result of the experimentation of over 15 years of applications in various ICT Villages in the field of maternal care, emergencies, cardiology, and traumatology.

The goal is to improve health conditions in Southern Mediterranean countries through the

participation of a network of clinical centres and European experts connected with local structures through a specific platform with ICT Solutions and innovative scientific m-devices. The system integrates the resources of hospitals and service centres in the area and the data collected on the field (diagnostic imaging, medical records, patient records, consultations, training, etc.) through the network, optimizing the home care of the patient, reducing costs and improving the use of resources. Due to political uncertainty, the project still needs to be validated.



## The 3D Robotic Building System

The 3D Robotic Building System is an innovative technology project designed by the OCCAM ARCHGROUP (Pierpaolo Saporito, Cesare Casati, Ivan Shumkov, Joseph di Pasquale) to provide large scale and fast housing for emarginated people and slums



# CONTACTS

Via Duccio di Boninsegna, 21/23, Milano, 20145, Milano (Italy)

[occam@occam.org](mailto:occam@occam.org)  
[www.occam.org](http://www.occam.org) • [www.infopoverty.net](http://www.infopoverty.net)

Linkedin: **occam-observatory**  
Instagram: **@occam\_milano**  
Facebook: **occam.milano**  
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X: **occam\_milano**