



**WORLD DIGITAL
SOLIDARITY AGENCY**

Villa Créatis
2 rue des Mûriers
69258 Lyon Cedex 09
France

Mr. R. Morel
IFIP Trustee
Direction du SEM (Prospective éducative)
2-4 rue Théodore-de-Bèze - CP 3144
CH 1211 Genève 3

Lyon, 27 February 2006

Dear Sir,

Further to my recent letter I would like to inform you that the Greater Lyon, leading public institution behind the «World Digital Solidarity Agency» has expressed the interest of IFIP joining the Board of the Agency which is in the process of being established officially under the French law as «Association loi 1901», a very simple and flexible legal structure.

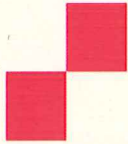
Joining the Board has no financial implication for IFIP. The pragmatic implications for IFIP of its involvement in the Board would be:

- the IFIP representative attends the Board meeting twice a year to express views on the Agency's work plan, expertise network and other activities;
- the IFIP representative provides occasional advice and/or takes initiatives to position the Agency in the international context of internet users.

We would be honoured if IFIP would accept to join the Board, thus reflecting the international nature of the Agency and its core mandate which is to facilitate the provision of high level technical expertise to fields projects.

I look forward to hearing from you
Best regards,

Louise Lassonde, PhD
Executive Secretary



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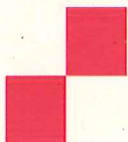
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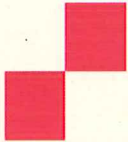
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www.dsa-asn.org

→ WHAT MISSION?
→ WHAT SERVICES?
→ WHAT PUBLIC?



Mission Statement

The World Digital Solidarity Agency's vocation is to help cities and local governments bridge the digital divide through decentralised cooperation. It informs, advises and provides the technical support needed to generalise the benefits of the information society to all.

Cities and local governments Digital solidarity stakeholders

The widespread use of digital media (mobile phone, internet and multimedia) hides considerable differences in accessing knowledge which touch the most vulnerable populations, in developing countries in particular.

Solidarity is a way of reducing the digital divide.
It concerns financial, material and human resources.
It enables projects and player networks to be set up around the world.


Cities and local governments are directly concerned by these issues as much at local level as through their decentralised cooperation actions.

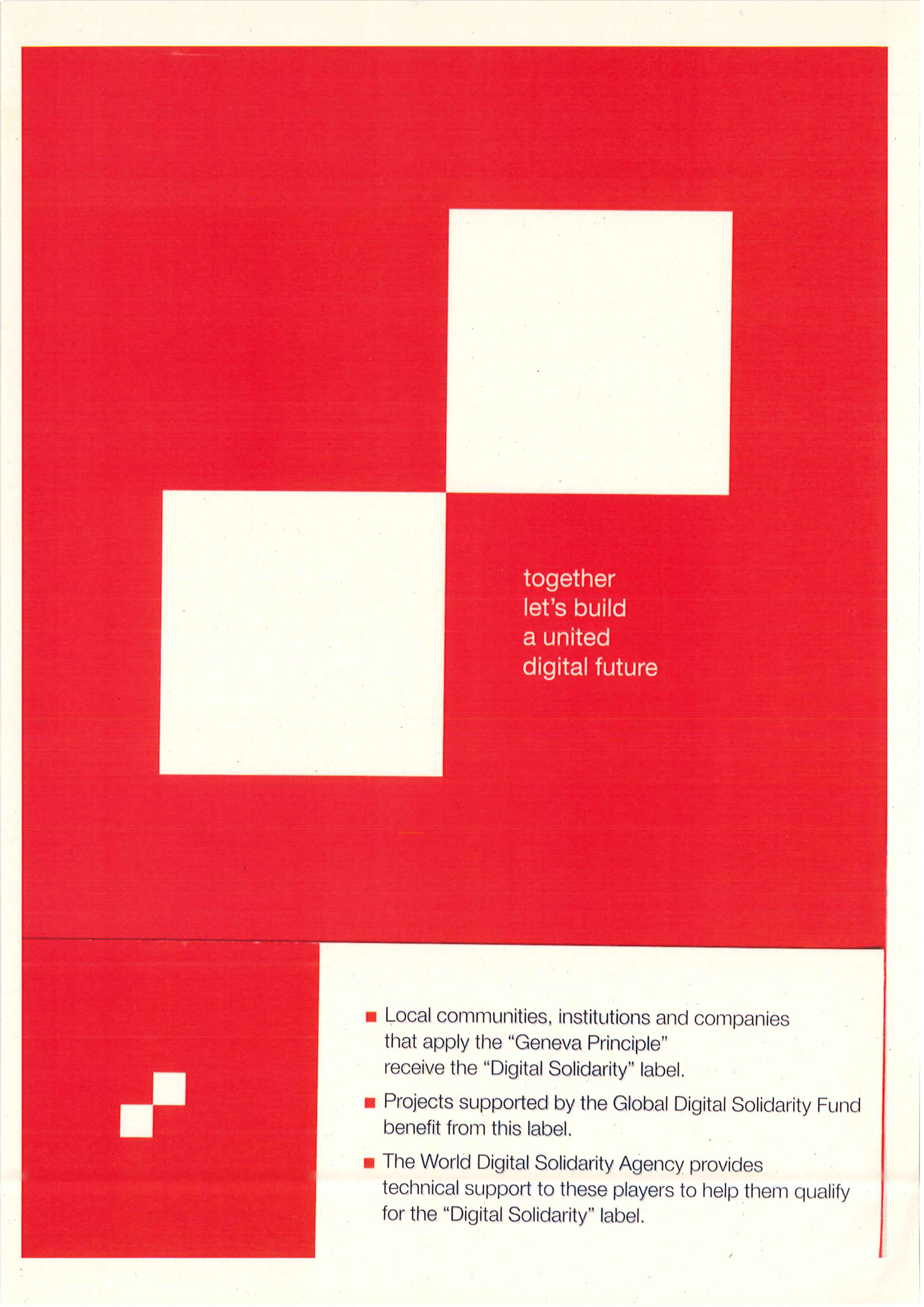
New means at the service of solidarity

States and international institutions generally reserve their financial aids for national governments.


To overcome cities and local governments' lack of means, a new world financing mechanism has been set up: the Global Digital Solidarity Fund (www.dsf-fsn.org). It supports projects led under the aegis of local communities and benefits communities connected a little or not at all especially in developing regions.

On a national scale, an increasing number of countries are setting up special funds intended to help cities and local governments develop their expertise on an international scale and reduce the digital divide through decentralised cooperation.





together
let's build
a united
digital future

- 
- Local communities, institutions and companies that apply the "Geneva Principle" receive the "Digital Solidarity" label.
 - Projects supported by the Global Digital Solidarity Fund benefit from this label.
 - The World Digital Solidarity Agency provides technical support to these players to help them qualify for the "Digital Solidarity" label.



Services

Backing up cities and local governments actions

■ Information

- Practical guidelines for local authorities: "Digital Solidarity Guidebook"
- Decentralised cooperation project sheets
- Concerted dialogue between local authorities, companies and the United Nations system

■ Advice

- How to set up a local or world-wide digital solidarity project
- How to find suitable partners
- How to succeed an e-twinning
- How to find financing
- How to dispatch material aid to partners
- How to create jobs
- How to make projects sustainable

■ Evaluation

- Contribution and partnership assessment
- Modelling success factors

Developing the digital solidarity "toolkit"

The digital solidarity "toolkit" includes:

- technological solutions linked to connectivity and access
- software packages
- applications and services to the public
- training accompaniment
- regulatory framework and economic model

The Agency acts as a catalyst to optimise the impact of investments by digital solidarity players.

There are three phases to its contribution:

Concertation: the Agency brings together innovation centres, companies, public institutions, associations and practitioners to develop the most suitable solutions.

Experimentation: The Agency makes deploying solutions easier through "pilots" which are used as an experimentation ground in real conditions.

Generalisation: the Agency offers investors and financial backers a validated and constantly updated "toolkit" for realising structuring projects on a very large scale.



The public

- Cities, local governments and their associations
- Decentralised cooperation institutions
- International aid agencies
- Companies
- Investors

The Agency acts as the Global Digital Solidarity Fund's technical advisor. It examines whether projects are in compliance with criteria fixed by the Fund. It accompanies the Fund's scientific Committee.

The Agency is recognised by the Information Society Commission of Cities and Local Governments United as the specialised authority in supporting decentralised cooperation projects in the field of digital solidarity.

The Agency supports the implementation of the World Summit on the Information Society's Plan of action (Lyon-Geneva 2003, Bilbao-Tunis 2005).



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The Global Digital Solidarity Fund

has 3 main characteristics:

- 1. The Fund proposes a new financing mechanism: 1% of public procurement contracts related to ICTs is paid to the Fund by the vendor on his profit margin**
- 2. The Fund mobilizes new partners: local authorities (cities, regions, provinces...), joined by national Governments, the private sector and NGOs**
- 3. The Fund promotes South-South cooperation: better adapted to local needs and local realities and more respectful of cultural diversity and local contents**



The Fund proposes a new financing mechanism

1. The Digital Solidarity financing mechanism (Geneva Principle)

- a. a contribution of 1% of public procurement contracts related to ICTs**
- b. paid to the Fund by the vendor on his profit margin**

2. Remarks

- a. there is a large difference between ICTs manufacturing price and selling price**
- b. if the 1% condition is clearly specified in public calls for bids, it is compatible with international treaties on public markets (according to WTO)**
- c. the 1% contribution is not a donation. It is an investment in future markets. It gives the right to use the label « **Digital Solidarity** »**



The Fund mobilizes new partners

1. The new partners

- a. in the field of ICTs for development, the traditional partners are national Governments, the private sector and NGOs**
- b. the Fund mobilizes new partners: the local authorities (cities, regions, provinces, ...). It is supported by different networks of local authorities**

2. Remarks

- a. local governments are by definition closer to citizens than national governments**
- b. local governments are more sensitive to the real needs and aspirations of local populations**
- c. local governments are in a better position to find solutions adapted to local realities and local needs**



The Fund promotes South-South cooperation

1. South-South cooperation

- a. traditional North-South cooperation is often too sophisticated to really be efficient**
- b. the Fund promotes South-South cooperation, better adapted to local realities and real needs, and more respectful of cultural diversity and local contents**

2. Remarks

- a. the Fund will target community-based projects, when possible managed by women organizations (using micro-financing)**
- b. the Fund will target community-based projects that address insolvent demand, in order to create new activities and new markets**
- c. the Fund will target community-based projects that respect cultural diversity, local contents, and are easily replicable**



Politically speaking, what is the Fund?

1. The Founding Father

Considering that it was necessary to take concrete action to fight the Digital Divide and the Contents Gap before the Tunis WSIS – phase II, President A. Wade of Senegal proposed to create the Global Digital Solidarity Fund

2. The proposal

The Fund is a proposal of the African Union and NEPAD (Committee on Infrastructures and ICT), supported by the WSIS (PrepCom II) and the United Nations Secretary-General

3. Political support - the Fund is supported by:

- a. the World Summit of Cities and Local Authorities in the Information Society (Lyon, December 2003)**
- b. the Founding Congress of United Cities and Local Governments (Paris, May 2004)**
- c. the International Association of the Francophone Mayors (AIMF, Ouagadougou, November 2004)**



Legally speaking, what is the Fund?

1. Statutes

- a. a Foundation established under Swiss law and placed under the surveillance of the Swiss Confederation**
- b. a Foundation Board of 24 members (1/3 public sector; 1/3 private sector; 1/3 civil society)**
- c. Headquarters in Geneva, in offices provided by the City of Geneva**

2. Founding Members

- a. States: Algeria, Dominican Republic, Equatorial Guinea, France, Morocco, Nigeria, Senegal**
- b. International Organisations: Intergovernmental Agency of the Francophonie**
- c. Cities: Dakar, Geneva, Delemont, Lyon, Paris, Santo Domingo, Curitiba, Urban Community of Lille**
- d. Provinces: Turin, Basque Country, Aquitaine, Rhône-Alpes.**



WHAT NEXT?

1. General Strategy

- a. 2005 – to broaden the political support**
- b. 2006/2007 – to turn political support into an International Treaty**

2. 2005 – The International Agenda

- a. to find new financing mechanisms for development**
 - G8/G21 (Scotland, July 2005)**
 - MDG +5 (New York, September 2005)**
- b. World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS)**
 - 2nd WS of Cities and Local Authorities on the Information Society (Bilbao, November 2005)**
 - WSIS – phase II (Tunis, November 2005)**

3. 2006/2007 – The International Treaty

- a. an International Treaty on the DSF, its financing mechanism and its intervention policy**
- b. World Conference on Digital Solidarity, 2006/ 2007**



CONCLUSION

1. **Information, education and knowledge are the best tools to fight ignorance and poverty**
2. **ICTs give access to information, education and knowledge**
3. **To promote ICTs for development, existing financial mechanisms are not sufficient : the Digital Divide and the Contents Gap are expanding !**
4. **THAT IS WHY THE FUND:**
 - a. **proposes a new financing mechanism:** (1% of public procurement contracts related to ICTs is paid to the Fund by the vendor on his profit margin)
 - b. **mobilizes new partners:** local authorities (cities, regions, provinces, ...), joined by national governments, the private sector and NGOs
 - c. **promotes South-South cooperation targeting community-based projects,** managed by women organisations, that are better adapted to local realities and real needs, more respectful of cultural diversity and local contents, and easily replicable