

# Digital Opportunity Channel

[www.digitalopportunity.org](http://www.digitalopportunity.org) launch coincided with World Telecommunications Day.

New Delhi, India — OneWorld ([www.oneworld.net](http://www.oneworld.net)), the online sustainable development and human rights network, and the Benton Foundation ([www.benton.org](http://www.benton.org)), the Washington, D.C.-based nonprofit that works to realize the social benefits of communications technology, announce the launch of Digital Opportunity Channel, an online community focusing on the use of information and communications technologies (ICT) for sustainable development.

Officially launching on World Telecommunications Day (May 17) from the OneWorld centre in India, the Web site will place a special emphasis on promoting digital opportunity in developing countries. "Developing countries have largely been marginalized in the global dialogue on the benefits and negative impacts of digital technologies," said Kanti Kumar, channel editor. "Digital Opportunity Channel aims to give organizations and community leaders - especially in the South - a platform for their voice to be heard."

People without access to new communications technology are increasingly being excluded from education, healthcare, good governance and the means to improve their own livelihoods. The challenge is to ensure that ICT no longer increases the gap between rich and poor but becomes an opportunity to help

bring greater equality and international understanding. Digital Opportunity Channel seeks to help tackle this challenge.

Digital Opportunity Channel builds on OneWorld's seven years of experience in ICT for development and presents content from OneWorld's worldwide partnership of over 1,250 development, human rights and environment NGOs.

All these NGOs are now using the Internet and other ICT to share knowledge and take action on poverty and human rights, or to support initiatives that aim to meet the basic needs of the most disadvantaged peoples of the world.

Digital Opportunity Channel also brings in the experience of the Benton Foundation's Digital

Divide Network ([www.digitaldividenetwork.org](http://www.digitaldividenetwork.org)), a community of practitioners, activists, academics, policymakers and people from ICT industries creating mutual strategies in bridging the digital divide.

“Organizations all over the world are implementing creative ICT programs, and there is so much we can all learn from each other’s experiences,” said the Benton Foundation’s Andy Carvin, co-editor of the new portal. “Digital Opportunity Channel is more than just a Web site. It serves as an online community whose participants will work actively to develop smart strategies for using ICT to make a real and lasting difference in the lives of people living in poverty.”

Channel features include news, campaign actions, success stories, opinion pieces by leading commentators, in-depth analysis and research, events listings, a beginner’s guide to digital divide issues, funding information, email digests and a dedicated search facility on ICT for development.

OneWorld is funded for Digital Opportunity Channel by the UK Government Department for International Development ([www.dfid.gov.uk](http://www.dfid.gov.uk)) and the

Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Directorate General for International Co-operation ([www.minbuza.nl/english/](http://www.minbuza.nl/english/)). The Benton Foundation involvement in Digital Opportunity Channel is supported by the AOL Time Warner Foundation ([www.aoltimewarnerfoundation.org](http://www.aoltimewarnerfoundation.org)) and the Markle Foundation ([www.markle.com](http://www.markle.com)).

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Note:

1. The theme of this year’s World Telecommunication Day is “ICT for all: empowering people to cross the Digital Divide”

[www.itu.int/newsroom/wtd/2002/](http://www.itu.int/newsroom/wtd/2002/).

Kofi A. Annan, Secretary-General, United Nations said: “On World Telecommunication Day, let us resolve to bridge the Digital Divide between countries, between rural and urban areas, between rich and poor, between educated and illiterate populations, and between men and women. And let us act urgently so that all the world’s people can benefit from the potential of the ICT revolution.”

by Glen Tarman, OneWorld