

Millennia 2015: Connecting for Health

*Dr Joan Dzenowagis
Liège, Belgium 7-8 March 2008*



**World Health
Organization**



World Health Organization

- Specialized agency of the United Nations
- Public health mandate, founded 1948
- 6000 staff in Geneva (HQ), regional offices and 192 countries
- Major initiatives
 - infectious diseases
 - maternal and child health
 - tobacco control



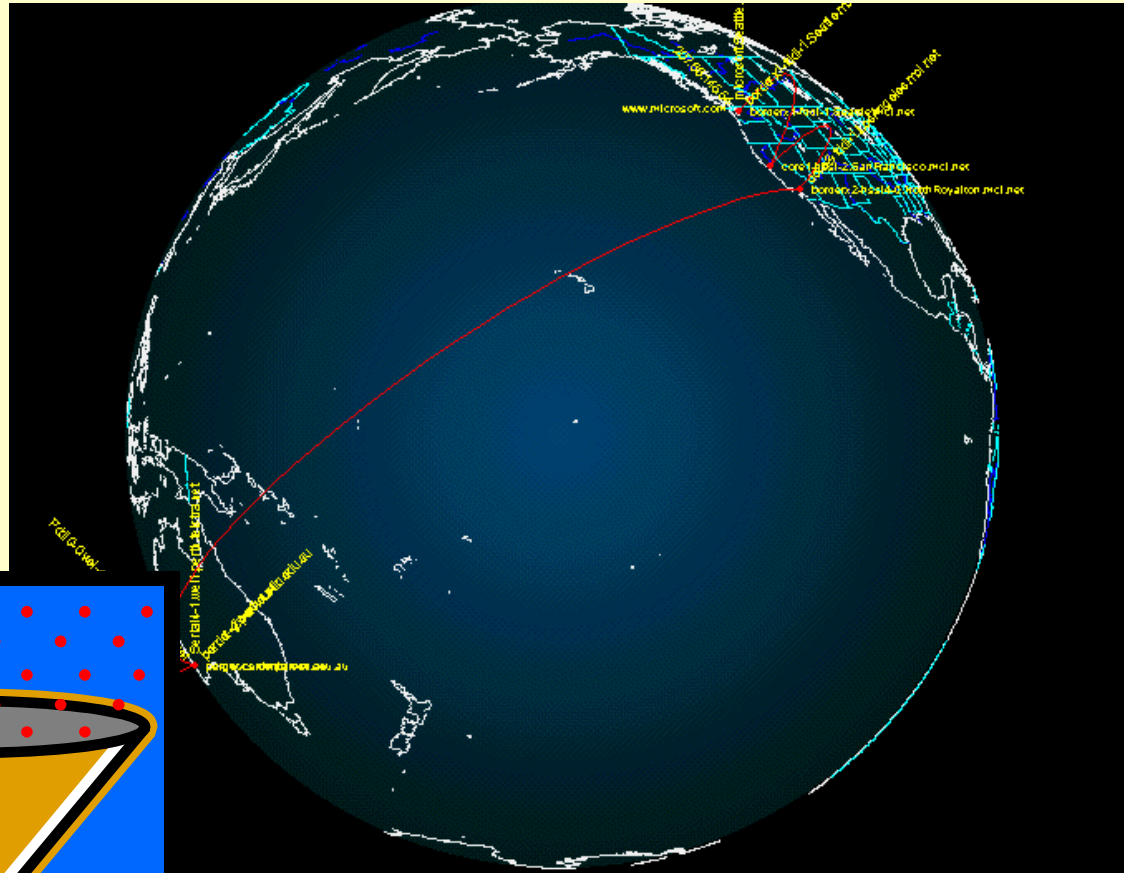
"Here is the great division of the world today, not between east and west or north and south, but between those imprisoned by history and those striving to shape it."



Madeleine K. Albright
United States Secretary of State
1997-2001

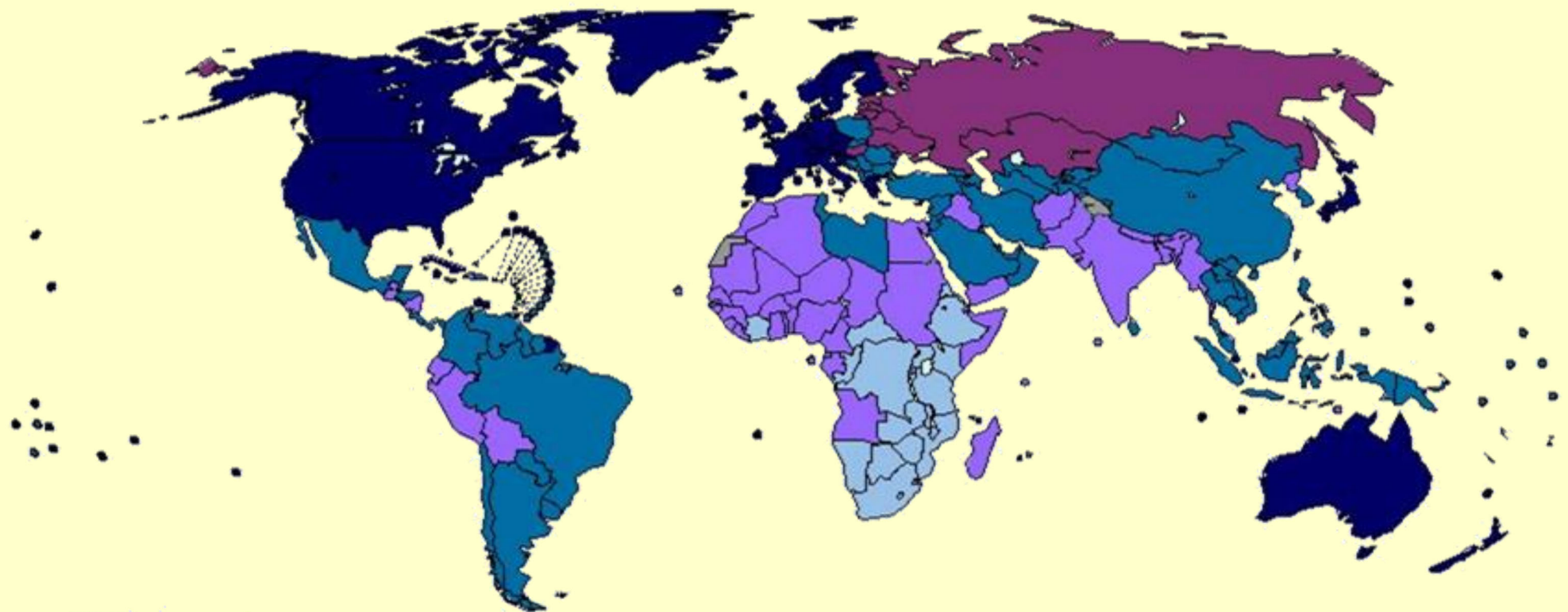
Future → globalization

- Growth
- Innovation
- Talent
- Knowledge



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Health: a shared challenge



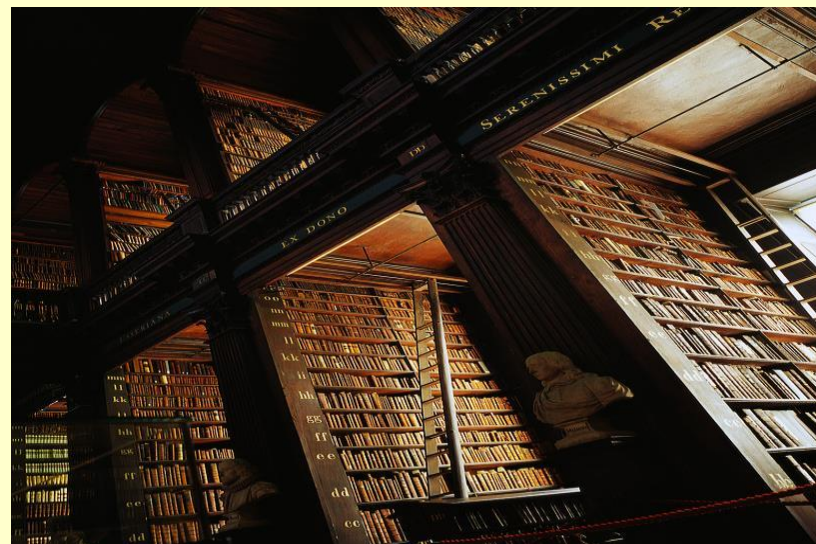
- No Data
- Very Low Child, Very Low Adult Mortality
- Low Child, Low Adult Mortality
- Low Child, High Adult Mortality
- High Child, High Adult Mortality
- High Child, Very High Adult Mortality

WHO Member States by
mortality stratum

Source: The World Health Report, WHO (2003)

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Network → 4th utility



From an information highway...
to a global library...
and well beyond



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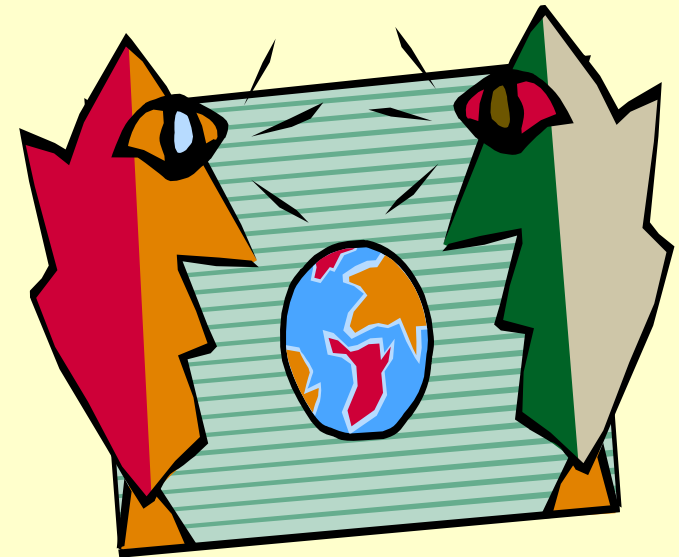
www = abundance



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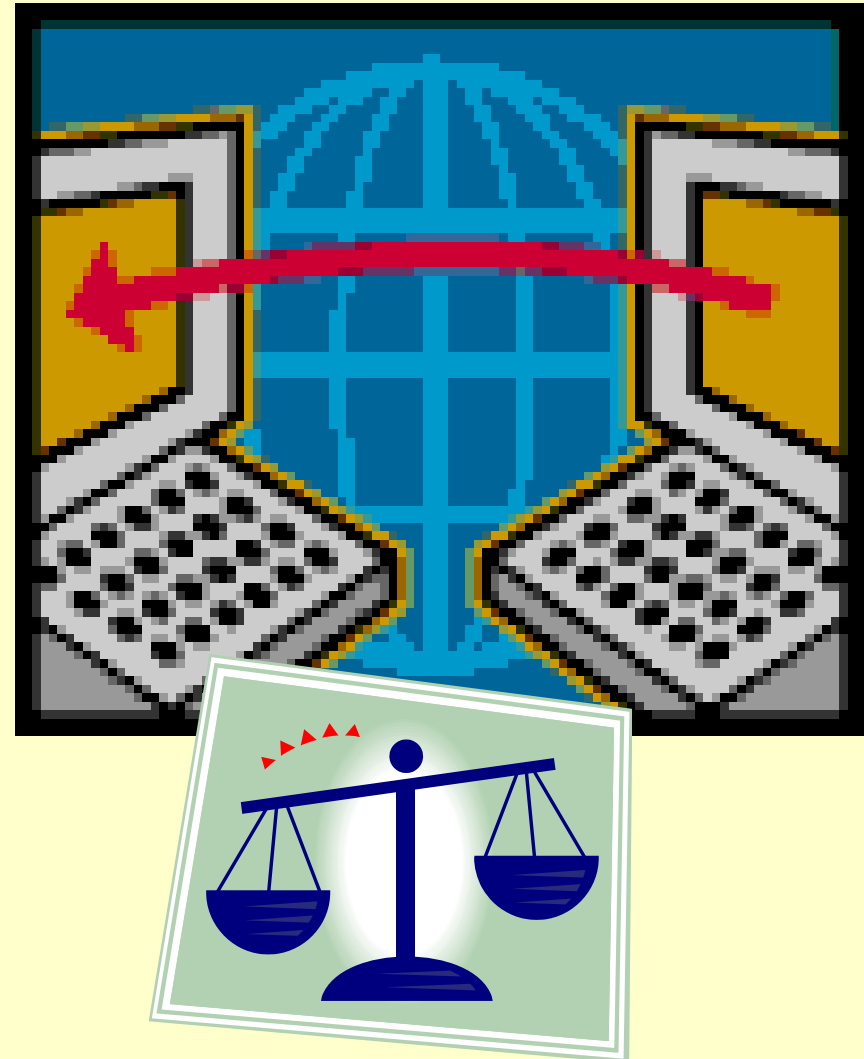
Networked world → redefining health

- Changing dynamics and relationships
- Citizens, consumers
- Providers, suppliers
- Governments
- New services, players, markets and issues



www = change

- A new public space
- No longer a monopoly on information
- Rise of new media: social response, public awareness, multi-stakeholder action, discussion on values & justice



Changing expectations and dynamics of health care

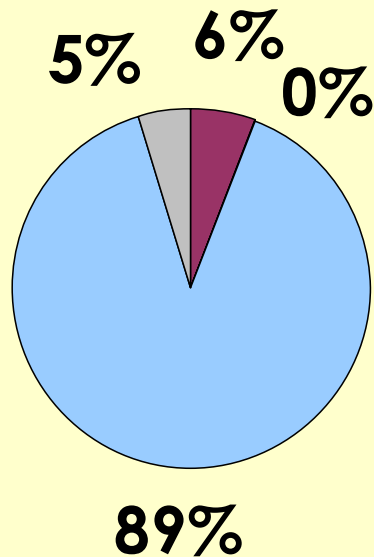
- Seeking information or second opinion
- Help from friends, support groups
- Buying drugs discovered through Internet research, advertising
- Enrolling in clinical trials

*...new avenues of care and
communication*

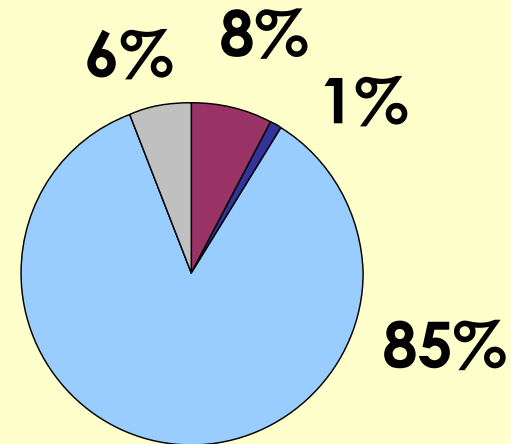


Causes of death in Europe

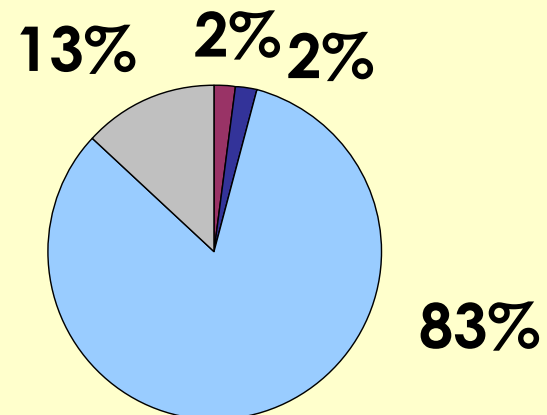
(A) Very low child and adult mortality



(B) Low child & adult mortality



(C) Low child, high adult mortality



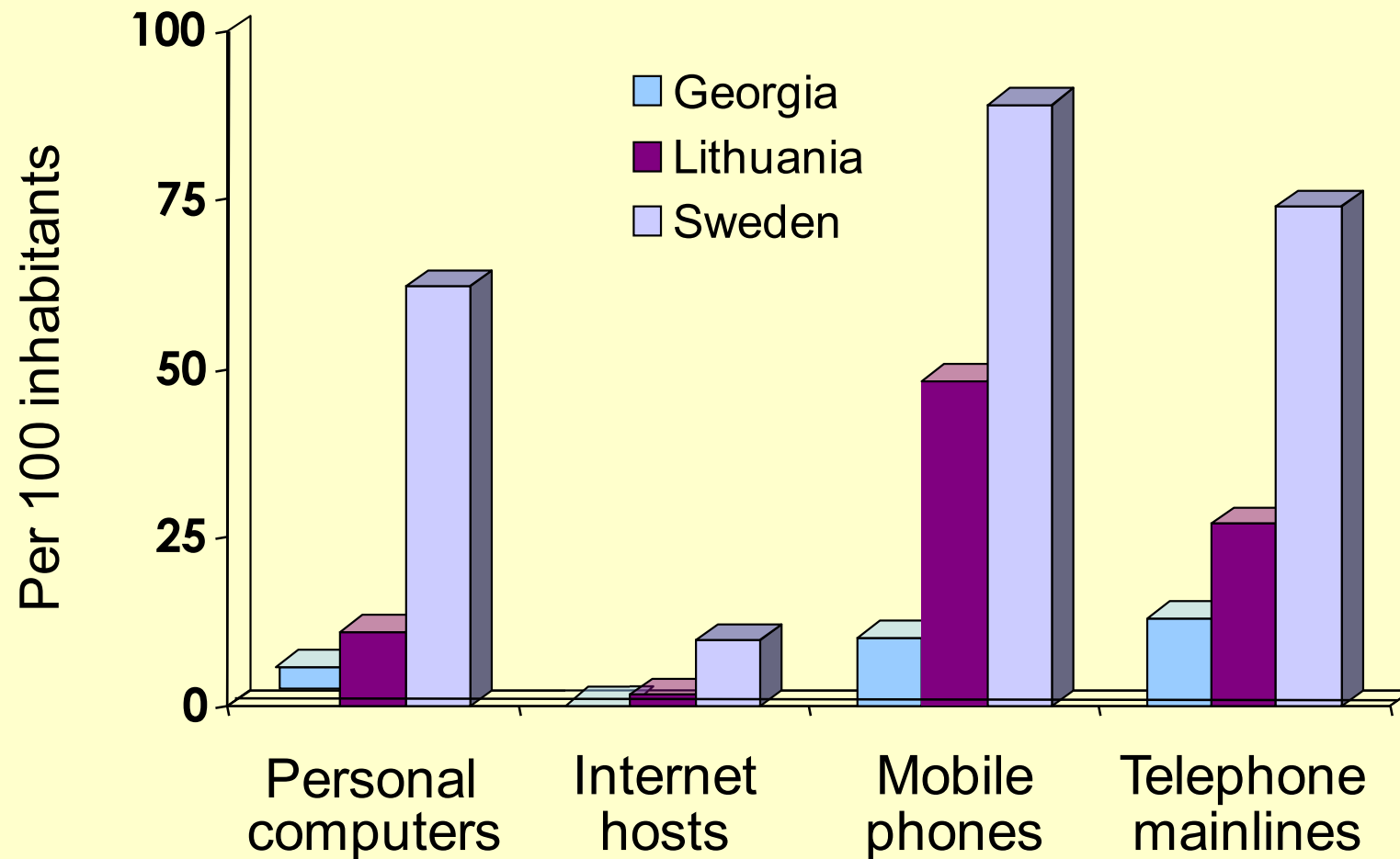
- Communicable diseases (including maternal causes)
- HIV, TB, malaria
- Noncommunicable conditions
- Injuries

Opportunities in chronic care

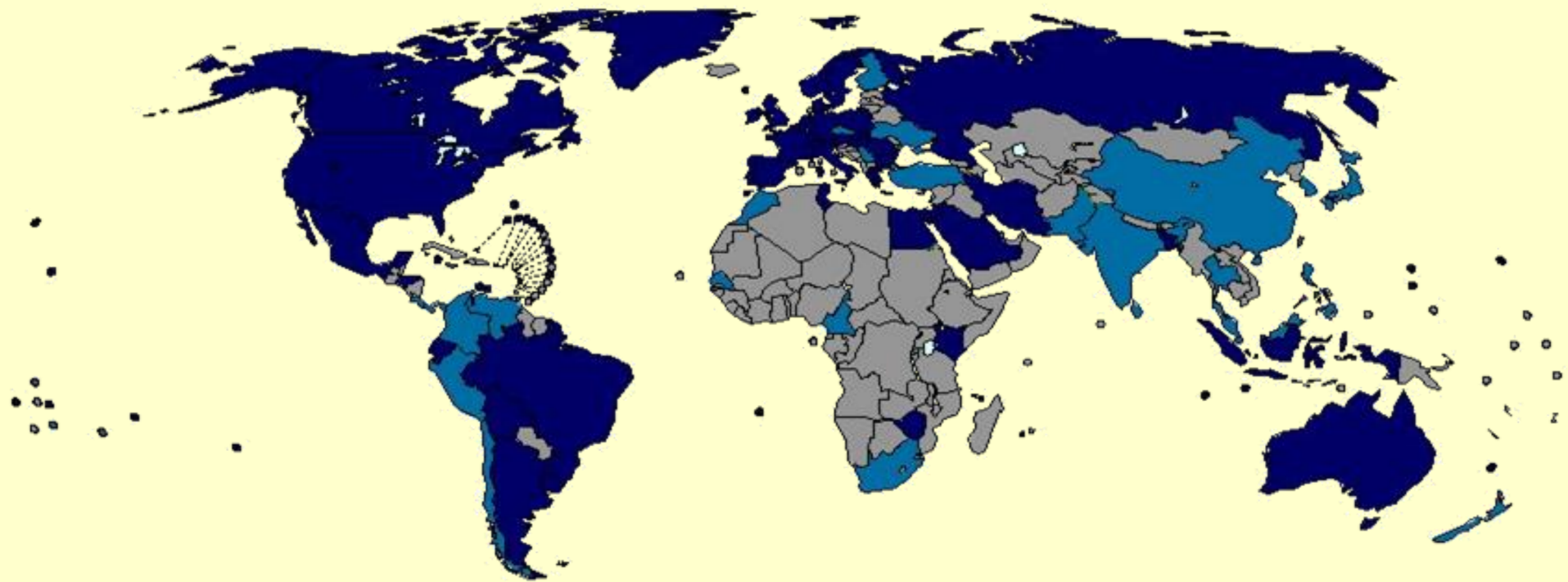
- Quality and safety: better care, avoid mistakes
- Improve efficiency, reduce costs
- Networks and tools: learning, practice, research, innovation
- Information, products, advice for healthier living
- Knowledge for disease prevention and management






Connectivity in 3 countries



Health and ICT expenditure



-  No Data
-  Health Expenditure > ICT Expenditure
-  Health Expenditure < ICT Expenditure

Global comparison of health & ICT expenditure

*Source: World Development Indicators, World Bank
(2004)*

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Knowledge = power ?



Photo: J. Dzenowagis

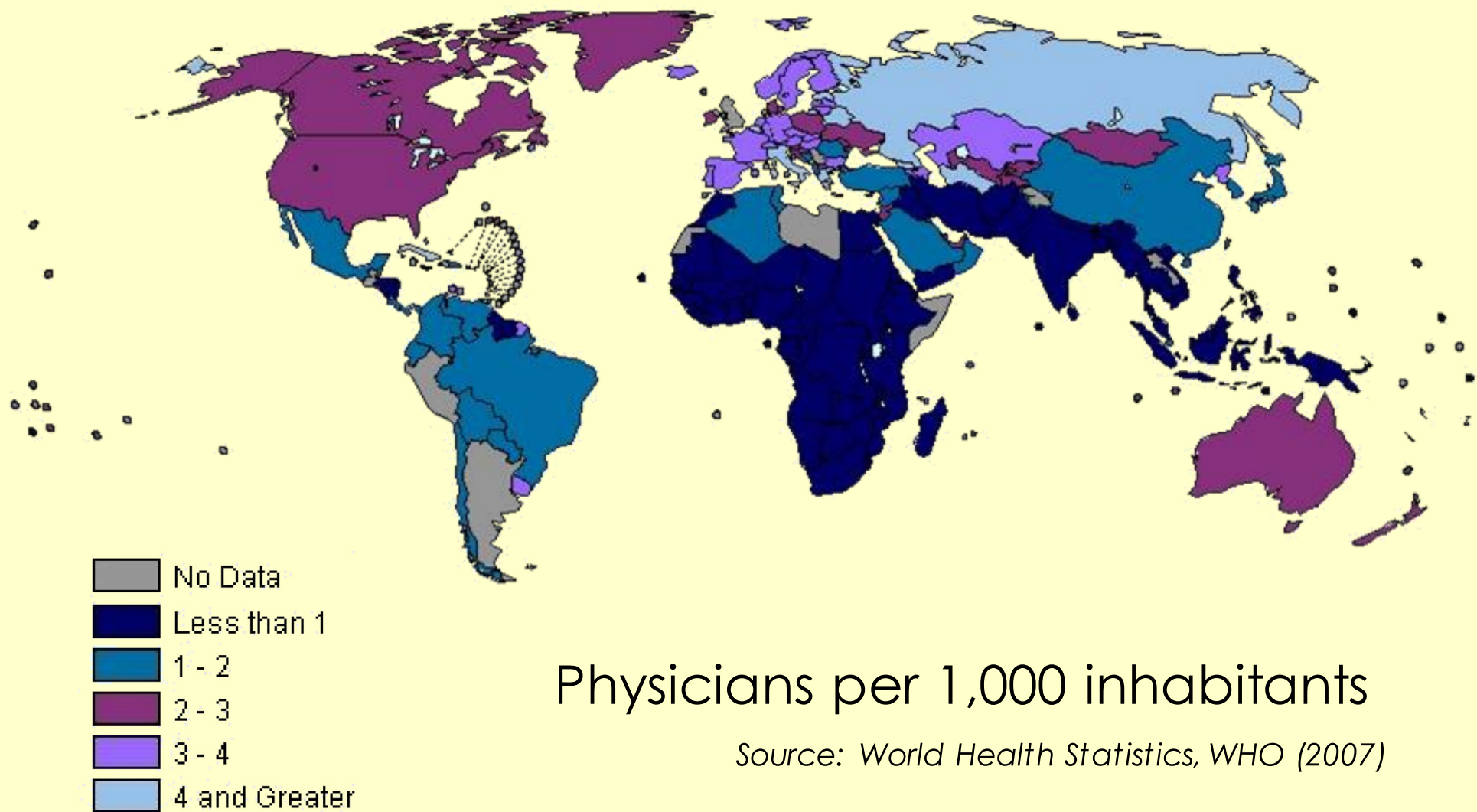
“I ‘Googled’ it.” Primary health care nurse, explaining how she looked for information (Orissa, India)

ICT makes the gaps obvious

- Professionals can access current medical knowledge, but not necessarily integrated in practice, research or education
- Patients can find out about treatment options, but availability not assured
- Both professionals and patients know better care is possible, but how to provide it?



Health worker shortages



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Connecting for health

- Political, cultural and economic barriers
- Many stakeholders
- Complex!
- Difficult!
- Imperative!



*"I never see what has been done;
I only see what remains to be done."*



Marie Skłodowska Curie
Nobel Prize in Chemistry, 1911

Governments

- Promote shared ICT foundation that benefits all sectors, allows local growth
- Ensure broad debate and diverse perspectives in policy forums
- Facilitate global and regional solutions to shared challenges: spam, security
- Alliances, innovation in priority areas



International agencies

- Standards, legal and ethical guidelines
- Measures to promote, preserve “trust” online
- Assessment of impact of new technologies
- Evidence & information for policy
- Equity: available, affordable ICT



Health institutions & academia

- Commitment to informing research and practice using technology
- Networking scientists and clinicians at all levels of care
- Joint research and knowledge sharing, investment coordination
- Advocacy: policy makers, public



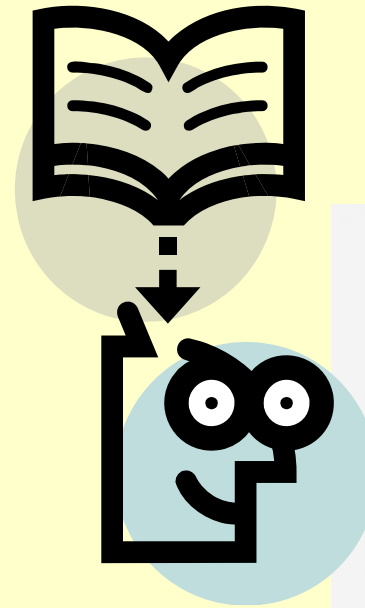
People's involvement

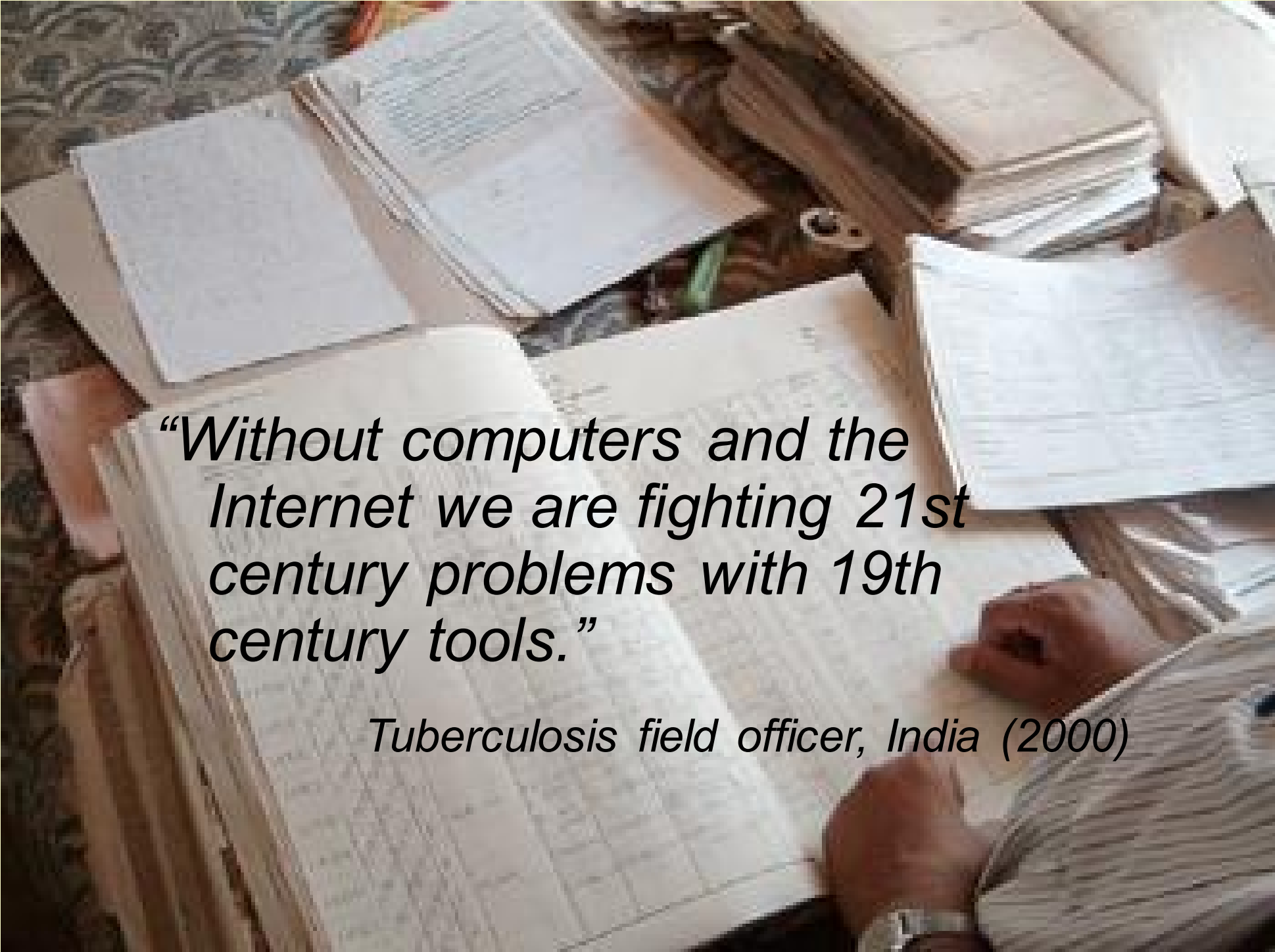
- Success will depend on social consensus on major actions
- Citizens need to be heard: values, goals, policies
- Aim: social equality, competence, engagement
- Trust, credibility: Common purpose and from common knowledge base



Health in our hands

- Reliable, relevant health information, when and where needed
- Literacy: to read and understand
- Power to decide and take action





“Without computers and the Internet we are fighting 21st century problems with 19th century tools.”

Tuberculosis field officer, India (2000)

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TED 2007

<http://youtube.com/watch?v=eAUH1IX54z8>



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