

# Foreword

In times of crisis, a phone line can be a lifeline. As natural disasters and civil conflicts increase worldwide, so too do innovative ideas about how to communicate in disasters.

New technologies and innovative uses of existing technologies are improving crisis preparedness, response, and prevention. Yet barriers to bringing these ideas to scale remain, and humanitarian aid groups and others must weigh the potential risks and rewards of using new communications technology tools.

Much like the creation of CNN and the 24-hour news cycle forever changed how the news is reported, the mobile phone has revolutionized how, when, and where we communicate with one another. With the growth of broadband and the convergence of telecommunications, computing, and multimedia, this revolution will only intensify.

The UN Foundation and The Vodafone Foundation commissioned this report to profile innovation on the frontlines of communications in emergencies, and to point to new opportunities for governments, civil society, and individuals alike to benefit in times of crisis from our increasingly connected world. Through the work of groups supported by the United Nations Foundation and Vodafone Foundation Technology Partnership, we have seen coordinated and efficient information sharing save countless lives. This report profiles some of this work.

We hope you enjoy this report, the fifth in our Access to Communications publication series. And we look forward to receiving your comments and ideas at [www.unfoundation.org/emergencies-report](http://www.unfoundation.org/emergencies-report).

Sincerely,



Vittorio Colao, CEO  
Vodafone



Ted Turner, Chairman  
United Nations Foundation



Ted Turner, Chairman



Vittorio Colao, CEO