



## The Ghana Scan-ICT Phase 2 Technical Workshop

**Venue:** The Conference Hall, Ghana Statistical Service, Accra

**Date:** Thursday, 30<sup>th</sup> March 2006

### **The Workshop Technical Briefing Document**

#### **The ICT4D Process and the Emergence of the Information Society and Economy**

1. The emergence of the information age has brought to the fore, the important role that *information, knowledge* and *technology* can play in facilitating socio-economic development. The effective use of information and knowledge is becoming the most critical factor for rapid economic growth and wealth creation, and for improving socio-economic well-being in both developed and developing countries.

2. A number of African countries, Ghana, recognizing the crucial role that ICTs can play in facilitating socio-economic development, have put in place their ICT for development (ICT4D) policies and strategies to facilitate the process of transforming their economies and societies. To support these efforts, attention is increasingly being directed at the development of suitable information society (IS) or ICT4D status and impact monitoring, assessment and measurement indicators.

#### **The Need for Developing Information Society (IS)/ICT4D Indicators and Mainstreaming them into the National Statistical System**

3. It has been acknowledged that: despite the fact that ICTs has for sometime been deployed to support broad socio-economic development activities and as well as to support the activities and the operations of the public and private sectors of most developed and developing countries, most National Statistical Organizations (NSOs) are yet to develop and integrate socio-economic related ICT indicators into their national statistical system.

4. Also, although ICTs and for that matter the ICT4D policies encompasses all the key economic and social sectors in most developing countries including Ghana, very little is known about the impact (assessed and measured in terms of specific IS/ICT4D indicators) of the development, deployment and the exploitation of ICTs on economic growth, gross domestic product (GDP) and for that matter the gross national income (GNI) of most countries.

5. Furthermore, the sectorial impact of ICT4D policies are not yet quantified (using specific indicators) and understood in most countries. In most of the developing and some developed countries, indicators for monitoring, assessing and measuring the impact of investments in pilot and national ICTs

initiatives like e-commerce, e-education, e-government, telecenters, telemedicine etc on households, (the targeted beneficiaries) and on the economy as a whole are non-existent in most cases.

### **The Purpose of the Ghana Scan-ICT Technical Workshop**

6. The Scan-ICT initiative under the auspices of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa is aimed at assisting African countries including Ghana to support their ICT4D initiatives through the development and the integration of suitable ICT indicators into their national statistical system.

7. The Accra Scan-ICT Technical Workshop which is being organized by the Ghana Statistical Service, the International Institute for Information Technology (INIIT) in partnership with UNECA is targeted at developing the capacity of the Ghana Statistical Service for developing and integrating ICT for Development (ICT4D) indicators data collection and analysis into Ghana's statistical system. This workshop brings together key local and international stakeholders from the public (including the Ministry of Communications and other MDAs) and private sector as well as the universities and research institutions to share experiences on the development of ICT indicators in sectors like education, e-commerce, and the economy as a whole.

8. The Workshop is focusing on the Scan-ICT Phase 2 process --- which is a follow-up to a 2001 pilot phase project which UNECA and the International Development Research Center (IDRC) of Canada, implemented in five African countries, namely, Ghana, Senegal, Morocco, Ethiopia, Uganda, and Mozambique. The 2<sup>nd</sup> phase which is being piloted in five African countries including Ghana is designed to facilitate the process of mainstreaming ICT4D indicators into national statistical data collection systems to support the ICT4D process and more importantly, the plan implementation monitoring, evaluation and impact assessment.

9. A key agenda item of the Workshop a technical session on the Scan-ICT Phase 2 Methodology – The Toolkit commissioned by UNECA and developed by INIIT. This Toolkit is designed to guide African countries in the development of their information society/ICT4D status and impact monitoring, assessment and measurement indicators as well as provide framework for integrating the compilation of the IS/ICT4D indicators into the national statistical system and processes of these countries

10. A basic premise underlying the development of the Tool Kit is that: African countries in their effort to develop their information society and economy will need to develop and compile suitable IS/ICT4D indicators that will guide their ICT4D policy and plan development and implementation process; monitor and assess their progress towards the development of their information and knowledge based economies (IKE) and monitor, assess, evaluate and measure the impact of the development of their IKE on the socio-economic well-being of their citizens (households) as well as on the performance of their businesses (the economy) and on their government systems and operations.

11. The Tool Kit provides a framework for integrating the compilation of the IS/ICT4D indicators into the national statistical system and processes of African countries. The basis for this is that, given that the goal of the ICT4D process in African countries is to develop the information society and economy, the bulk of the statistical data collection exercise of the National Statistical Organizations (NSOs) will over time be shifting away from collecting purely socio-economic related data (as is now the case) to collecting data that reflects the development of the information society and economy and assessing its impact on economic units like households, businesses and government entities and operations. The goal therefore is to provide a framework that facilitates the process of integrating the collection of data

on the IS/ICT4D indicators into the existing national statistical system to facilitate the process of this envisaged shift in focus in the future.

12. The Toolkit and the corresponding core indicators constitutes Africa's contribution to the international partnership activities directed at implementing the World Summit for the Information Society (WSIS) plan of action item requesting member states of the United Nations to develop and compile suitable indicators to monitor and measure the development of their information societies.

### **Implementing the World Summit on Information Society (WSIS) Plan of Action on ICT Indicators**

13. The Accra Technical Workshop also represents one of the key start-up events aimed at implementing the World Summit for the Information Society Plan of Action which emphasise the need for all countries to incorporate within their respective national ICT4D plans, provisions for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the plans with a view to measure their impact and progress towards the development of the information society and economy within the respective countries. The WSIS Plan calls on all member countries of the UN to:

- put in place performance evaluation and benchmarking (both qualitative and quantitative), schemes through the development and use of appropriate statistical indicators and research results
- develop and launch a composite ICT Development (Digital Opportunity) Index -- which could be published annually, or every two years, in an ICT Development Report. The index could show the statistics while the report would present analytical work on policies and their implementation, depending on national circumstances, including gender analysis.
- develop and use appropriate indicators and benchmarking, including community connectivity indicators, to clarify the magnitude of the digital divide, in both its domestic and international dimensions, and keep it under regular assessment, and tracking progress in the use of ICTs to achieve internationally agreed development goals, including those of the Millennium Declaration.
- assess (using specific indicators) and report regularly on universal accessibility to ICTs, with the aim of creating equitable opportunities for the growth of ICT sectors.
- develop gender-specific indicators on ICT use and needs to assess the impact of national ICT programmes and initiatives on the lives of women and girls.
- develop tools to provide statistical information on the Information Society, with basic indicators and analysis of its key dimensions with priorities given to setting up coherent and internationally comparable indicator systems, taking into account different levels of development.

### **The Anticipated Outcomes of the Accra Workshop**

14. The Workshop which is aimed at launching the Ghana Scan-ICT Phase 2 process provides an opportunity to: (i) share local and international experiences in the development, collection and analysis of data on ICT4D related indicators to support Ghana's ICT4D process and initiatives aimed at developing for Ghana an information and knowledge-based economy and society and (ii) develop the capacity of the Ghana Statistical Service to start the process of developing and integrating ICT4D indicators into the nation's statistical system.