

AFRICAN UNION
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African ICT Week (AICTW) Concept Paper



AFRICAN ICT WEEK 2009
SEMAINE AFRICAINE DES TIC'09

16-22 November 2009

2009 Theme:

“ICTs in Africa: Challenges and Prospects for Development”

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I. INTRODUCTION

We live in this moment the numerical period. Indeed, the convergence of telecommunications, computer science and audio-visual gave us today new Information Communication Technologies (ICT). ICT today are present in our daily and facilitates it to us. Many world summits were and are the implementation of the information Society. The World Summit of the Information Society (WSIS) of Tunis, November 2005 adopted a final document (Tunis Commitment) which is presented in the form of a moratorium in favour of the Information Society building in the service or development. The Tunis Summit, while reaffirming its commitment to benefit best possible from the capacities and the potential of the ICT, invites all the governments to adapt the ICT for a sustainable development while strengthening the national, regional and international co-operation. Following the 2005 Tunis Commitment, African Union, organization of economic integration seized this opportunity and launched for the first time the African ICT Week (AICTW).

The week meant to provide a constant reflection of the gains Africa has made in harnessing ICTs to realize a knowledge-based economy. Today, Knowledge and Information hold massive potential for propelling the African continent development process, building all inclusive knowledge economy and ultimately achieving the millennium goals by 2015. ICT are for Africa, a way, other that linear, to reach the development and thus to make a success of its transformation of an agricultural company into a company of knowledge.

Indeed we need to multiply our efforts in integrating the use of ICTs in all our activities, our methods, working tools, our plans and programs of development. The AICTW should provide a platform for creating awareness about the opportunities, challenges and benefits derived by adoption of ICTs in Africa.

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II. WHY AN AFRICAN ICT WEEK?

African Union is conscious of the obstacles that prevent the African populations adapting the ICT. Indeed, the defect of access to the infrastructures of telecommunications and electricity (in particular in rural area), the cost still too high of the communications, the existence of social barriers (difficulties based on gender, languages, the lack of local contents and the cultural considerations) and the insufficiency of clear and engaged policies in favor of the ICT encourage us to react positively and to invite our government to take part and implement the activities suggested by the AICTW.

By organizing the AICTW, African Union wishes to implement the Tunis commitment on the Information Society and thus to contribute its share to the advent of technological Africa, integrated in the knowledge Society and the fulfillment of the Development Millennium Goals.

Thus, by the celebration African ICT week, African Union would like to make so that each African can profit from the possibilities which can offer by ICT, by inviting African governments, the private sector as well as the civil society to work together to improve the access to the infrastructure and the ICT and also information and the knowledge. African Union would also like, by this occasion, to reinforce the capacities, to increase confidence and safety in the use of ICT, to support, make known and make respect the African cultures and cultural diversity.

The ICT week should draw the attention to the values of the ICTs and specifically to promote the use of ICTs and to outline the vision of the Africa in building a knowledge economy.

The Week also aims at demonstrating the values and advantages of communicating digitally and in general how ICTs could improve our life quality.

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III. OBJECTIVES WE WANT TO ACHIEVE WITH AICTW

The general objective of the organization of AICTW is to arouse the interest of the African populations to the use of the ICT for a successful transformation of Africa at this numerical era from an Agricultural Society to a Knowledge Society.

Specifically, the specific objectives to be reached are also those of the African action plan on knowledge Economy (ARAPKE), in particular:

- a. Bridging the digital divide;
- b. To promote the right of all to have equal access to ICT value added services and to experience the advantages of using technological services.
- c. To develop, maintain and stimulate people's curiosity, interest and enjoyment in technologies
- d. To promote the acquisition of appropriate technological skills, concepts, principles, methods and vocabulary.
- e. Boosting security and trust in the sectors rely on the using of information networks;
- f. To encourage people to develop informed opinions about their technological services and to be able to support them by reasonable arguments.
- g. Leveraging ICTs as a tool for creating an informed-Africa society
- h. Promoting greater ICTs awareness among African governments, community and stakeholders.
- i. To use technologies in a variety of subject areas and contexts.
- j. To attract more and new investments to the African technological market, especially the ICTs market.

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IV. IMPLEMENTATION OF ICT WEEK

- a. **Theme of the AICTW:** Selecting a proper theme to the week which is inline with the most active events in the continent's ICTs sector. Accordingly and since this year 2009 is dedicated to the ICTs, the theme of the AICTW will be **"ICTs in Africa: Challenges and Prospects for Development"**
- b. **The African paperless Day:** The day will be observed by promoting the use of electronic means for all correspondences within our private and public institutions and express our commitment to the digital revolution in Africa. We will observe the Paperless day on Monday 16th November 2009.
- c. **Management of the Week:** The AU will set up a task force consisting of representatives of the relevant Departments of the AU, representatives of the international, regional and sub-regional partners and others to effectively coordinate the activities of the week and publicize the AICTW within the continent.
- d. **Promotion of the AICTW:** The African Union will use all its instruments, including regional meetings and conferences to publicize the objectives and activities of the AICTW.



V. ACTIVITIES SUGGESTED for the AICTW 2009?

The activities suggested here would emphasize on the role of ICT, for the growth and development of the continent.

Thus, African Union invites the Member States to observe the paperless day in public administrations and private. In the same way, invites them to organize and coordinate the activities of information and sensitizing such as conferences, workshops, free trainings on ICT for students and general public.

African Union encourage the governments of the Member States to invite the Service Providers of telecommunication and the mobile telephony operators to take an active share at the African ICT Week by organizing Open Days on their activities just as by providing points of free Internet access (cables and wireless) in order to make discover technological opportunities offered by ICT to student and general public.

In order to accustom the African people to the new methods of communications, the governments will invite the mobile telephony operators to make it possible to the general public to send free SMS/MMS during a given period of the day at the time of the AICTW. This will create a passion for this new interpersonal communication technology.

The table hereafter recapitulates the various activities suggested during the ICT week.



Proposed Activities For The AICTW 2009:

	Activities	Pattern	Organizers	Targeted Groups
1	Paperless Day	The public authorities and the private sector are invited to use this day the electronic communications in their daily activities and their relations with their partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governments • Private Sectors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governments • Private Sectors • Universities • Schools • Institutions • General public
2	Quiz : My ICTWords	Technological words, initials and terms will be proposed via outlook to STAFF MEMBERS during the AICTW. Winners will get prizes like Pin's and a PENDRIVE.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AUC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AU Staff Members
3	Free Access Point to Internet (Free APNET)	ICTs service providers to offer discounted services for the Week or for a few hours a day during the ICT week e.g. provide free Internet access and offer free hosting services for the schools and universities. We need some place would be create in their companies and/or in some specified Schools and Universities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governments • Private Sectors • Universities • schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governments • Private Sectors • Universities • Schools • Institutions • General public



	Activities	Pattern	Organizers	Targeted Groups
5	Video conference, ICT courses & training	<p>Advantages of using the Open-source Software</p> <p>The Member States are encourage to organize the various following activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of technology VSAT • Presentation of the use of ICT in the public governorship • Presentation of all the Websites of E-government of their country (the Presidential office, Ministries, and main NGO of Human and Citizen rights) • Course on How to make an effective and targeted research by Internet • Course on ICT and MEDIA • Free formation on the use of Internet (Chat room, forum of discussion, sign up a free mail) • Advantages off using the Software Open-source 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governments • NGOs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private Sectors • Universities • Schools • Institutions • General public



	Activities	Pattern	Organizers	Targeted Groups
6	Media Blitz	Partnership with the Media to promote ICT's by means of bulletins, newspaper articles etc to familiarize people with the advantages of technology and its applications (e.g. E-Learning, E-Commerce, E-Health, E-Government).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governments • Private Sectors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools • Universities • Institutions • General Public
7	ICT Tours & Computer Show	Governments and service providers can offer an Open Days for sightseeing tours to ICTs and technology centers and operators to stimulate the curiosity of the new generations for the technologies in early age stages. They can also Organise ICTs and technology exhibition and fairs. Which will work as an opportunity to explore new ICT horizons and as an occasion to attract more investments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governments • Private Sectors • Institutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools • Universities • Governments • Private Sectors • General Public

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	Activities	Pattern	Organizers	Targeted Groups
8	ICT Week Billboard	Prepare and publish special leaflets, sites, magazines and press releases on the occasion of the AICTW. Thus, it will assist in project promotion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governments • Private Sectors • Schools • Universities • Institutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Public
9	Free SMS & MMS	During this AICTW, the Mobile telephony operators are encouraged to allow a free hour for everyone to communicate by SMS and MMS (Multi Media Service). Thus, they will promote the use of this way of electronic communication.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobile Telephony Operators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private Sectors • Universities • Schools • Institutions • General Public

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VI. FACTORS OF SUCCESS

The following factors are necessary for the success of the AICTW:

- ✓ Leadership and visibility of the process by high government officials - Minister or Head of State – from mobilization of participants, publicity and the conducting the week itself
- ✓ Involve as many stakeholders and interests groups as possible
- ✓ Develop a strong brand – e.g. through a Poster (AU to produce) to be distributed to all schools, badges, caps, T-shirts and other branding materials as resources allow, possibly in collaboration with private sector and/or development partners.
- ✓ Extensive media coverage to spread the message widely and to raise awareness and enthusiasm for ICT.
- ✓ Ministers to report to themselves and share experiences to African Union in order to evaluate the AICTW impact and to share the experiments.

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VI. CONTACTS SECRETARIAT

For more information, please contact:

Mr. Auguste Yankey K.
Human Resources, Science and Technology Department (HRST)
African Union Commission
BP 3243 Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
Tel : 00251-115-77-00 ext. 369
Fax : 00251-115-54-03-00
E-mail: yankeyka@africa-union.org

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