



PICTA Bulletin is a monthly publication that provides information on activities of members in the partnership, as well as offers news on ICT-related activities in Africa. This bulletin is also available at: <http://www.uneca.org/aisi/picta/PICTAbulletin>

NEWS NEWS NEWS NEWS

Africa Bureau renews commitment for African participation in WSIS 2005. The meeting of the WSIS Africa Bureau, which took place from 20 to 21 February 2004 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia evaluated participation of African stakeholders before and during the Geneva conference and made proposals for the African regional preparatory conference for WSIS phase 2. This also included issues on partner coordination, CSO/Media participation; modalities for organising Tunis 2005; the role of the Bureau and the need for a strong outreach and communication strategy. A set of recommendations were made focusing on strengthening the Bureau's role in the entire process to ensure effective and active African participation. For further info, contact Makane Faye (mfaye@uneca.org)

Scan-ICT, statistics and data gathering for the Information Society. ECA, in collaboration with IDRC held a concluding workshop for the first phase of the Scan-ICT project from 17 to 18 February 2004 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The workshop brought together ICT practitioners and statisticians to reflect on the first phase of Scan-ICT, a multi-donor project which also includes the European Commission and NORAD aimed at building Africa's capacity to gather information and data needed to support ICT investments. The workshop reviewed the Scan-ICT methodology used in each country through country reports, identified lessons learnt, and discussed approaches to mainstreaming Scan-ICT into decision making processes, including linkages to the national e-strategy (NICI) development process and attaining the MDGs. The need for extension of the project to its second phase with a possibility of including some more countries was recommended. A new dynamic to this workshop was the participation of statisticians from selected National Statistics Offices, who made calls for their inclusion in the next phase of the project. The participation of the statisticians also assisted ECA to determine how they can be involved in measuring the Information Society. For further info, contact Mohammed Timoulali (mtimoulali@uneca.org). For more on Scan-ICT Phase 1 go to: <http://www.uneca.org/aisi/scanict.htm>

NICI Review Workshop. ECA, in collaboration with the European Commission organised a two-day NICI

review workshop from 19 to 20 February 2004 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The workshop took stock of best practices and lessons learnt in the formulation and implementation of NICI plans and strategies. National NICI focal points presented their respective processes and reviewed the NICI methodology used in each country. The workshop also identified new approaches to implementation and how the policy-making process can be enhanced in the future. In addition, experiences in developing sectoral and village e-strategies were shared among the participants. For further info, contact Makane Faye (mfaye@uneca.org)

Web:

<http://www.uneca.org/aisi/nici>

UN Secretary General Extends Mandate for Task Force Until End 2005. UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan has decided to extend the initial three-year term of the UN ICT Task Force until the end of 2005. This will extend the work of the Task Force until the second phase of the WSIS, due to be held in Tunisia in December 2005. More: <http://www.unicttaskforce.org>

Microsoft defends African government deals. Conceding that open source software has a role to play, Microsoft has defended its deals with African governments, following a strongly-worded warning by the Free Software and Open Source Foundation for Africa (<http://www.fossfa.org/tiki-index.phpFossfa>). FOSSFA issued a warning to African governments earlier this week that entering into "deals" with Microsoft would jeopardise their own software industries and limit their countries' ICT growth. Microsoft rejects this claim, saying there is place for both commercial and open source software in Africa, and that both will contribute to the continent's ICT growth. FOSSFA co-ordinator Bildad Kagai said in a letter to open source advocates in Africa that recent agreements and partnerships that African governments had been signing with Microsoft were "in essence, killing [the] local software industry and inhibiting the potential of developing local human capacity in the field of ICT". More: <http://allafrica.com/stories/200402200482.html>

ICTs for Intercultural Dialogue - A UNESCO Project for Indigenous People. Preserving indigenous peoples' cultural resources by fostering access to ICT, thus contributing to narrowing the digital divide is the aim of this new project. Involving ten indigenous communities - the Naga and the Mentawai in the Asia Pacific region, the Pygmies and the Himbas in Africa and the Quechua, Aymara, Kikanantay, Rapa Nui and Mapuche in Latin America

- the project aims at fostering the use of ICTs to contribute to revitalizing their identity and at recovering their cultural self-worth and dignity. More: http://portal.unesco.org/ci/ev.php?URL_ID=14364&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201

UN to support global e-Democracy. A project to promote e-democracy across the world is to be launched by the United Nations this summer, beginning with a web portal aimed at strengthening IT practice in national parliaments of the developing world. The portal will be launched with best practice guidelines supplied by Angola, Cameroon, Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Uganda. The project follows a UN resolution, adopted in October 2003, which called on Parliaments worldwide to use IT for greater public transparency and accountability, and to build closer links between nations (<http://www.ipu.org/conf-e/109-3.htm>).

Connecting rural networks with Knowledge Sharing. In preparation for the launch of the KariaNet Initiative, to take place in April 2004, IFAD supported 5 country-level workshops. The Outcome Mapping methodology developed by the Evaluation Unit at IDRC guided the process. Each 2-day workshop set out to articulate a National vision and mission, identify main boundary partners and their respective outcome challenges and formulate a series of progress markers which would demonstrate the changes in the behaviours and actions of the boundary partners that the projects would expect, like and love to see. Bellanet co-facilitated 2 of the 5 workshops taking place in Egypt and Tunisia. KariaNet is a joint initiative of IFAD and IDRC that seeks to strengthen knowledge-sharing capacities through the identification of problems and solutions across IFAD projects and among its stakeholders in five countries of the NENA region - Egypt, Morocco, Jordan, Sudan and Tunisia. A regional start-up workshop is being planned for April 2004 to launch the initiative. More: <http://www.bellanet.org>

IT Training for Gambian Journalists. Twenty-seven Gambian journalists, who are currently undergoing a UNESCO sponsored journalism training in the Gambia, have been participating in a week long course aimed at building basic IT capacity, including web searching, at the Resource Center of the UNESCO Regional Office for Education in Africa, in Dakar, Senegal. http://portal.unesco.org/ci/ev.php?URL_ID=14340&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201

Building Communication Opportunities (BCO) Alliance: the successor to the Building Digital Opportunities Programme (2001-2004). The Building Digital Opportunities (BDO) Programme comes to an official close at the end of March 2004. The follow-up to the BDO is the Building Communications Opportunities (BCO) Alliance (2004-2007). Five bilateral agency partners and five NGOs support the BCO. The former include: the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the UK

Department for International Development (DFID), the Dutch Directorate-General for International Cooperation (DGIS), the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (DMFA) and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC). NGO partners are: the Association for Progressive Communication (APC), Bellanet, IICD, OneWorld International (OWI) and Panos. More: <http://www.iicd.org/partners>

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

5 March 2004, Coordination Meeting on Information Society Statistics, New York, USA. The objective of the meeting is to exchange information on the state of advancement of measuring Information Society in national statistics systems and to agree on common procedures – as a means of a questionnaire- to approach statistical offices with the objective of raising information in a standardized basis. The meeting will be attended by experts from DESA, UN Regional Commissions, the OECD, ITU and others.

15 – 19 March 2004, Africa Source: African Free and Open Source Software Developers Meeting, Namibia. This practical workshop will, for the first time, bring together Free and Open Source Software (F/OSS) developers from across Africa. During the five day event, participants and facilitators will share technical skills and experiences, discuss key challenges in realizing F/OSS projects, and develop concrete strategies for strengthening the nascent community of F/OSS technologists working in African contexts. The Africa Source workshop will connect African software developers with the goal of building the F/OSS developer community in Africa. This event is organized by the Tactical Technology Collective, the AllAfrica Foundation, and SchoolNet Namibia, in cooperation with the Free and Open Source Software Foundation for Africa (FOSSFA). It is supported by the Open Society Initiative Southern Africa, the Open Society Institute - Budapest and the government of Namibia. More: Web: <http://www.tacticaltech.org> Email: africasource@tacticaltech.org

15 – 19 March 2004, Telecoms Business Simulation (TBS), Maseru, Lesotho. The Commonwealth Telecommunications Organisation (CTO) is holding an Eastern and Southern Africa multilateral event on Telecommunications Business Simulation (TBS). This regional workshop is being hosted by the Lesotho Telecommunications Authority (LTA) on behalf of the CTO. The workshop has been designed to demonstrate the strategic and commercial issues faced by an incumbent telco in a new multi-carrier competitive environment. This event will take the form of four teams, which represent four companies that have fixed-line, mobile and ISP businesses, and compete against each other by interacting with the computer model. More: <http://www.cto.int>

17 – 19 March 2004, The ICT World Forum, Hannover, Germany. The theme of the Forum is “achieving business profitability with technology: strategy & the high performance technology business”. The Forum is the most powerful gathering of ICT leadership in the world. The ICT World Forum has a strong history of attracting the best speakers from the leading technology companies. The Forum will host the world’s leaders in ICTs in conjunction with the world’s largest ICT event - CeBIT. Its goal is to create a global brain trust to focus on the present and future issues facing the ICT industry and its global business. The Forum will attract a broad network of leaders from business, government and academia together focusing on the key issues facing the global ICT industry in the year ahead. Its purpose is to empower the members with a unique viewpoint that helps sets the tone for CeBIT, the world’s largest ICT gathering. More: www.ictwf.com

23 – 25 March 2004, The Kenya National ICT Convention, Incorporating: The CTO Conference: Implementing the WSIS Action Plan, and ea.telecom, Nairobi, Kenya. The Kenya National ICT Convention will be the culmination of a series of national sector-focused ICT conferences convened by the National ICT Board and supported by IDRC. In addition, the event will include two regional events: The first one is the Commonwealth Telecommunications Organisation (CTO) Conference: Implementing the WSIS Action Plan, and the second one is the fourth annual ea.telecom Conference to provide a specialist stream within the Convention for regional operators, regulators, policy-makers and users, to learn from positive technical, regulatory and organizational developments in the telecommunications sector. For full details, contact: Sean Moroney, AITEC UK, Tel: +44-1480-495595 sean@aitecafrica.com OR Andrew Karanja, AITEC Kenya, Tel: +254-(0)722-702187 Web: www.aitecafrica.com

25 – 26 March 2004, UN ICT Task Force Global Forum on Internet Governance, UN HQ, New York, USA. A Global Forum on Internet Governance will be held at United Nations Headquarters in New York, to bring together leading actors and all relevant stakeholders, including Member States, civil society and the private sector, interested in Internet governance issues. More: <http://www.unicttaskforce.org/>

25 – 27 March 2004, Sixth Meeting of the UN ICT Task Force, UN HQ, New York, USA. The Sixth Meeting of the UN ICT Task Force will address the outcomes of the Geneva phase of WSIS. The agenda, once finalized, will be posted on the UN ICT Task Force website. During the first two days of the meeting, the discussion will be held in a format of a Global Forum on the subject of Internet governance. It will be an opportunity for relevant stakeholders - including those who are not members of the Task Force - to engage in an open discussion of all

aspects of this range of issues. In the period leading up to the Global Forum, an on-line discussion of these issues will be organized to ensure as broad and comprehensive representation of views, perspectives and recommendations as possible. More: <http://www.unicttaskforce.org/>

14 - 16 April 2004, SADC Regional Consultation on National e-Government Readiness, Gaborone Botswana. This is a collaboration between the Centre of Specialisation in Public Administration and Management (CESPAM) and the Commonwealth Network of IT for Development (COMNET-IT), who together are engaged in a partnership for the development of materials and training for e-Government. The event will address e-Government in its broadest sense and provide insights into the status, trends and achievements within SADC countries, and lessons learnt. It will also provide templates for the assessment of e-Government readiness and progress, capacity-building and support requirements, both nationally as well as regionally. The Government of Germany through GTZ, the Commonwealth Secretariat and the Government of Botswana are sponsoring the workshop. More: www.cespam.net

22 – 24 April 2004, Workshop on e-Strategy Burkina , Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. This is a validation workshop for the e-Burkina strategy. It is organised by Délégation Générale à l'informatique. More : Makane Faye (mfaye@uneca.org).

3 – 5 May 2004, Tenth Meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts for Southern Africa (ICE), Lusaka, Zambia. ECA-SA is organizing the Tenth ICE Meeting to be held at the Mulungushi Conference Centre in Lusaka, Zambia from 3 to 5 May 2004. The theme of the meeting is “Private Sector Development in Southern Africa”. The 10th ICE meeting is expected to critically assess progress achieved by the ECA Southern Africa Office (ECA-SA) in implementing its work programme as determined by priorities for 2003/04. It will also consider private sector development; sustainable development; implementation of the system of national accounts; and the status of information for development activities in the sub-region. The meeting will make recommendations on the future orientation of the work programme of the Southern African ECA sub regional office. Contact: The Director, ECA Office in Southern Africa, P.O. Box 30647, Lusaka, Zambia, Tel (260 1) 228502/5, Fax: (260 1) 236 949, E-mail: srdcsa.uneca@un.org

3 – 8 May 2004, ITU Telecom Africa 2004, Cairo, Egypt. Conscious of the opportunities that new and affordable telecommunication technologies have brought about, the Forum at ITU TELECOM AFRICA 2004 will focus on the following themes: a) Creating successful business models, b) Policy challenges, c) Appropriate technologies, d) Using ICTs to meet the UN Millennium Development Goals, and e) Africa and

the world. More:
<http://www.itu.int/AFRICA2004/index.html>

24 – 26 May 2004, e-Nigeria: Implementing the WSIS Process: The case of Nigeria, Shehu Musa Yar’adua Conference Centre, Abuja, Nigeria. The conference aims at drawing up strategies for the implementation of the WSIS process in Nigeria; exploring the framework for the development and use of ICTs as the driving force of Nigerian economy; identifying necessary ICT human resources and infrastructure required for the deployment of e-strategies; proffering solutions to the challenges of ICT within the framework of Nigeria economy; examining the existing strategies for national development and examine strategies of re-designing them in line with the latest technologies and applications in the global economic structure. More: www.enigeria.org

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Last Call for Participation. The World Summit in Reflection: a deliberative dialog on WSIS. The journal of Information Technologies and International Development (ITID) and the Berkman Center for Internet & Society at Harvard Law School are calling for contributions to a special dialogue on the outcomes, outputs, and experiences from the World Summit on the Information Society. These contributions will be assembled into a series of deliberative reports that are expected to help chart a course towards the 2005 meeting in Tunis. For more on ITID: <http://mitpress.mit.edu/ITID> For more on the Berkman Center: <http://cyber.law.harvard.edu> Additional contact information: The World Summit in Reflection, Attn: Dr. Michael L. Best, The Nunn School of International Affairs, Georgia Institute of Technology, 781 Marietta Street, NW, Atlanta, GA 30332-0610 USA, michael.best@inta.gatech.edu

KEMILINKS INTERNATIONAL: ICT AFRICA AWARDS. These Awards have been established to promote the use of ICTs in Africa and to encourage best practice. The Awards have been designed to recognise and reward those individuals and organisations that have demonstrated excellence in promoting the use of ICT for the overall development of the African continent and are open to all Africans (in or outside Africa) and African based organisations (limited or otherwise), public bodies, and not-for-profit organisations that are directly or indirectly engaged in the promotion of the use of ICT technologies. The Awards categories are: 1) Country with Best Policy Framework; 2) Country with Best Convergence Policy Framework; 3) Regulator with Best Regulatory Framework; 4) Best National Mobile Operator; 5) Best Regional Mobile Operator; 6) Best National Fixed Line Operator; 7) Best Multimedia Signal Distributor; 8) Country/Broadcaster with the best local content; 9) Best Internet Service Provider (includes VOIP, Hosting Services, Email service

providers); and 10) Most influential African in international arena. More: kemilinks3@aol.com

Global Information Technology Report 2003-2004; World Economic Forum (WEF). Covering a total of 102 economies, the Networked Readiness Index of the new Global Information Technology Report measures the preparedness of economies to participate in, and benefit from ICT developments. Since it was first launched in 2001, the Report has become a valuable and unique benchmarking tool to determine national ICT strengths and weaknesses and evaluate progress. The Report also highlights the continuing importance of ICT application and development for economic growth. The executive summary and chapters 1 and 2 can be downloaded free of charge from: <http://www.weforum.org/site/homepublic.nsf/Content/Global+Competitiveness+Programme%5CGlobal+Information+Technology+Report>

Delnet Programme Supporting Local Development. This is an initiative of the International Training Centre of the International Labour Organization (ILO), which supports and assists local actors in the promotion of the territorial development processes since 1998. The current Distance Learning Specialization Courses include a) Management of Local Development, and b) Gender Approach to Local Development. Course enrolment includes access to the Information and Technical Advice Services, the Delnet databases and Networking. Training, information and technical advice services are provided through the Internet and via email. At the end of the course, after the final examination, participants will receive an official diploma issued by the ITC of the ILO. Course enrolment: Academic year: April 2004 - April 2005, Deadline for enrolment: 26 March 2004 / Start date: 23 April 2004. For further information: Web: <http://www.itcilo.it/delnet> E-mail: delnetenglish@delnetitcilo.net Telephone: +39 011 693 6656

PICTA Bulletin is a monthly information sharing service designed to keep members informed of each other's activities in the area of ICTs in Africa.

Please send relevant information, stories or exchanges you may want to share with other members to atemtime@uneca.org for inclusion in subsequent issues of the PICTA Bulletin. If you have any comments and/or suggestions, please contact:

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