



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: PICTA Members

AFRICA REGIONAL PREPARATORY CONFERENCE FOR WSIS II - Accra, Ghana, 28 January – 4 February 2005. This event which is based on the theme, “*Access – Africa’s key to an inclusive Information Society*” will be to prepare Africa’s effective participation in the second phase of the WSIS to ensure a strategic and interdependent digital partnership to promote economic growth and human development of the continent. The conference is expected to bring together all stakeholders, ranging from Government to civil society, private sector and academia, parliamentarians, local authorities, African regional institutions, development partners and international organizations.

Coordinated by the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) under the framework of the African Information Society Initiative (AISII) and hosted by the Government of Ghana, the conference is convened as part of the Infrastructure cluster of the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD).

Discussions are expected to center around the following themes and issues:

- Evaluation of the implementation of the Geneva Plan of Action
- Information Society and Regulation
- National and Regional e-strategies
- Access and Infrastructure
- Open-Source Software and African languages/content
- Intellectual Property Rights
- Capacity building for policy-makers and iLaw
- Financing the information society;
- Internet Governance
- ICT applications in socio-economic sectors
- ICT and Poverty Reduction
- Information Society Indicators
- Local governance
- Private Sector Forum
- Multi-Stakeholders Partnerships Forum with: Media, Parliamentarians, Gender, Youth, Academia, etc.

Participants are expected to come up with a common position and a regional statement on achieving an Information Society for the continent, including an African position on two unresolved issues of the Geneva phase, namely Internet Governance and Financing Mechanisms. It is also expected that a strong digital partnership will be formed around the core themes of the regional statement. The conference has already received support, pledges and commitment from members of the Partnership for Information and Communication Technology in Africa (PICTA) including **IDRC, IICD, Industry Canada/ePoi-Net, La Francophonie, GKP and Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)**. More: <http://www.uneca.org/aisi/accra2005/>

Consensus Statement: ADF IV ICT Focus Group. The 4th African Development Forum (ADFIV) was held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 11 – 15 October 2004 under the theme “Governance for a Progressing Africa.” The ADF IV ICT Focus Group discussions focused on the role of ICTs in governance. The multistakeholder group produced a statement that outlined the role of all stakeholders, stressing the need for leadership and commitment from Governments in introducing ICTs in the governance process. The ICT & Governance component is reflected in the main ADF IV Consensus Statement, emphasizing that.....” *African governments need to develop appropriate policy frameworks, supported by legislation for e-governance, that are linked to strategic development objectives; enlist high-ranking political e-government champions; focus awareness, outreach and training efforts on the less privileged segment of targeted users, particularly women and neglected rural communities; and promote local content and support local language development.* More: http://www.uneca.org/adf/adfiv_consensus_statement.htm

ICTs and Governance Publication. Published by International Books & the Economic Commission for Africa; the book was launched during ADF IV. Governance expert and one of the editors, Mohamed Salih said that the book was already

used as a text book by some universities in the Nordic countries. He added that appeal of the publication was that it sought to document the numerous ways in which information through GIS, statistics and ICTs were being used in the African context to promote and strengthen the governance process on the continent. The publication is an outcome of the Third Committee on Development Information (CODI 3) meeting organised by ECA and is on sale on amazon.com
More: <http://www.uneca.org/aisi/codibook.htm>

IICD Publication in ICT Roundtable Process.

This booklet forms part of a series of studies that attempts to capture the effectiveness and lessons learned from the IICD Roundtable process as part of its Country Programme strategy to empower people through ICT-enabled development. The Roundtable process is a way of bringing local actors from a specific sector together to develop and implement their own ICT projects and policies with support and guidance from IICD. Empirical examples from different countries are provided throughout the booklet. To download the booklet please visit:
<http://www.iicd.org/articles/iicdnews.2004-09-30.6202541139>

Information Project for Ghanaian Farmers. This three-month-old pilot project introduces the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) such as radio, mobile telephony and Internet for conducting interactive distance-learning programme for farmers in Integrated Crop and Pest Management (ICPM) as well as market information. The project was launched on August 25th amongst over one hundred farmers and extension officers, as well as officials from the Ministry of Food and Agriculture, various Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and residents of the Navrongo Community, in Ghana's Upper East region. The project is aimed at filling the huge information gap that farmers in that region have to contend with. Even though the immediate beneficiaries of the project are the 4000 farmers in the area, it is expected to benefit many other farmers in the region especially vegetable crop farmers. The project is a partnership of various stakeholders including the Ghana Information Network for Knowledge Sharing (GINKS), Communication for Research and Development (COMFORD) and Irrigation company of the Upper Regions (ICOUR). GINKS is an information networking partner of IICD. Please visit <http://www.ginks.org/> for more information.

Academia Research Network (ARN) on the Information Society. Following the ARN / WSIS action plan, the thematic networks recently held a face-to face meeting respectively in Dakar for

"Creating the enabling environment", in Maputo for "ICTs Industrialization in Africa", in Tunis for "Information society indicators", and in Bamako for "African languages and content development in cyberspace". They came up with short term, medium term and long-term action plans. For more information contact Thierry Amoussougbo (tamoussougbo@uneca.org)

TanEdu e-Newsletter. The IICD supported educational website project called Tanzania Education and Information Services Trust (TanEdu) aims to provide accurate and reliable information about education to all stakeholders in the education sector throughout Tanzania. High quality information from local and national sources is gathered and linked to the TanEdu website. Information is available about schools, examinations and school administration, and provides the latest news in the education sector. The users (students, teachers, parents, and all interested in education) are facilitated to navigate the World Wide Web in order to access the wealth of helpful sources of information. Also they can exchange ideas with stakeholders of the education sector in Tanzania through discussion boards and chat rooms. This is all done via the website www.tanedu.org which is very well received. Since June 2004, a monthly newsletter is produced (also on the website) of which the off-line version is disseminated up-country amongst others via a co-operation with Peace Corps volunteers. Please visit <http://www.tanedu.org>

Partnership on Measuring ICT for Development. ECA and ITU organized a regional workshop on ICT Indicators from 26 to 29 October 2004 in Gaborone, Botswana based on the Partnership on measuring ICT for Development framework. The workshop deliberated on the issues of building statistical capacity and developing expertise to collect and disseminate Information and Communication Technology (ICT) statistics in the region. ECA presented the results of the sub-regional metadata collection of available ICT surveys in the region, and proposed a list of core ICT indicators. The Phase 2 of SCAN-ICT project was also launched. More: <http://www.uneca.org/aisi/ictind.htm>

International Symposium. ECA in collaboration with The Graduate School of Telecommunications and Information Technology (GSTIT) organized in Addis Ababa from 19-21 October 2004 an international symposium on ICT Education and Application in Developing Countries. Some of the main themes of the symposium attended by over a hundred participants included: "ICT education, e-learning and local content in developing countries",

"The role of management in ICT development", and "ICT technologies and services for developing countries". More:

<http://www.uneca.org/apps1/newsfromdivisions/News.asp?cmd=view&articleid=128>

AISI Awards at Highway Africa. The Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), in collaboration with Highway Africa co-hosted the African Information Society Initiative (AISi) 2004 media awards ceremony in Grahamstown, South Africa. The event was televised live on SABC Africa. The 1st and 2nd prizes in various categories of ICT reporting were sponsored by GTZ, IDRC, IICD and OSIWA. More: <http://www.uneca.org/aisi/mediaaward.htm>.

Furthermore, ECA and OSIWA took the opportunity during this year's Highway Africa to launch its Media Study, 'African Media and ICT4D', with a gathering of approximately 80 journalists from all over Africa

http://www.uneca.org/eca_resources/Publications/Publications_DISD.htm. The AISi Media Module was also tested in Grahamstown targeted at the media awardees and other interested journalists.

African journalists trained on secure online communications. Online security and privacy should be of concern to anyone who uses the internet. As media workers and human rights organisations around the world make increasing use of online technologies, there is a corresponding increase in the need for skills, knowledge, and tools to ensure that the use of technology is both effective *and secure*. This need is especially acute in the case of groups operating under repressive political conditions or in situations of conflict, where the challenge is to gather, protect and disseminate information effectively in a way which minimises risk to activists. With this background in mind APC offered a three-day workshop on "Secure Computing and Online Communications" during the Highway Africa conference in September in Grahamstown, South Africa. More: <http://www.apc.org/english/news/index.shtml?x=26309>

Launch of NGO.ZA - ICT Services for Civil Society. The Southern African NGO Network (SANGONeT) and Internet Company South Africa (ICOZA) launched a new joint venture, called NGO.ZA. Jay Naidoo, former Minister of Communications, and Chairperson of the J&J Group, was the keynote speaker at the launch of NGO.ZA. ICOZA is part of the J&J Group. More: <http://www.sangonet.org.za/snsite/index.php?option=content&task=view&id=65&Itemid=55>

Results and experiences of the winners of the GenARDIS small grants fund. The small grants fund: Gender for Agricultural and Rural

Development in the Information Society (GenARDIS) was awarded to nine projects who are now sharing their results and experiences. Together with two partner institutions, IICD and IDRC, CTA implemented a small grants fund known as GenARDIS, to support innovative activities that will contribute to the understanding and application of ICTs by and for rural women. The response to the first call for project proposals for nine grants of €5000 each was overwhelming – more than 360 submissions were received in less than two months, a clear indication of the interest in the topic. More:

<http://www.iicd.org/articles/iicdnews.2004-10-17.6528658659>

OTHER NEWS OTHER NEWS

Suitcase radio combating locust crisis. People in Timbuktu, in Mali, have been battling hordes of locusts that destroy their crops, with the help of a suitcase radio donated by UNESCO in 2001. This mobile radio is taken to the anti-locust operational headquarters and even into the fields to broadcast live from the local communities, to ensure that urgent information reaches all communities. It also allows local people to participate, have their say and share traditional knowledge, which is proving vital at the moment. More:

http://www.i4donline.net/news1.asp?fol_name=News1&file_name=news181

Education in S. Africa to focus on ICT. In South Africa, new models of learning that are incorporating Information Communication Technology (ICT), are changing the concept of education in the country. Such an initiative will help in creating both better job opportunities for students, as well as lead to enhancement of their technical skills. In addition, ICT could enhance the management and administrative capacity of schools. It is the goal of the Department of Education, that by 2013, every South African manager, teachers and students will be ICT capable. This means that they should be able to use ICT confidently and creatively to help develop personal goals, and be full participants in the community. More:

http://www.i4donline.net/news1.asp?fol_name=Edu&file_name=Edu79

AfriNIC Moves Forward and Promotes Regional Integration. The African Network Information Center (AfriNIC) has taken another step towards formal recognition as an official Regional Internet number Registry (RIR) with the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) Board announcing its provisional recognition, the last stage before full recognition.

AfriNIC has begun managing Internet number resources for the Africa region, including IPv4 and IPv6 addresses. More: <http://icann.org/announcements/announcement-14oct04.htm>

RESOURCES

NEW – ePol-NET Africa Resources; e-Government. As the regional node of the Global ePolicy Resource Network (ePol-NET) ECA has been developing ePol-NET Africa web resources for African countries on implementing strategies and policies on the Information Society. Resources on e-Government from African as well as from industrialized countries are available at <http://www.uneca.org/aisi/nici/egov.htm>

New website: APC Africa ICT Policy Monitor. The Association for Progressive Communications (APC) announces the launch of a new Africa ICT Policy Monitor website. "What we want is an information society based on social justice and human rights. That's only going to happen if the people affected by the policies get involved in their development. Collecting indispensable documentation since 2001, the new look 'Africa Monitor' has a new design and structure to make it even easier for African civil society to find the materials they need to get involved in ICT policy lobbying." <http://africa.right.apc.org>

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

18 - 20 November 2004, East Africa Regional e-Government Strategy Workshop, Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania. This event is being organised by the East African Community (EAC), in collaboration with ECA and AITEC Tanzania. The aim is to combine the expertise of ICT policymakers and e-government planning executives in shaping a regional e-government strategy. ECA's support is through the Governments of Finland and Canada (Industry Canada/ePol-Net). The Canadian e-Policy Resource Centre (CePRC) will also provide expertise during the event. Contacts: Enock Yonazi/EAC (eyonazi@eachq.org); Thierry Amoussougbo/ECA (tamoussougbo@uneca.org); Harry Hare/AITEC (harry@aitecafrica.com).

19 - 20 November 2004, Seventh Meeting of the UN ICT Taskforce, Berlin, Germany. Promoting Enabling Environment for Digital Development will be the overall theme of the Seventh Meeting of the UN ICT Task Force, to be held in Germany this November. Following the format adopted during its Sixth Meeting, the first one-and-a-half day of the event will consist of a Global Forum where participants are expected to

address issues on Enabling Environment. <http://www.unicttaskforce.org>

19 - 20 November 2004, Building the ICT Capacity of African Universities for Promoting Development, The Institute of African Development, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY, United States. The importance of ICT as an effective tool in promoting sustainable development in Africa will be the focus of a major symposium organized by the Institute for African Development and the Department of Communication, November 19-20, 2004. The symposium will bring together scholars in information technology to discuss the relationship between development and ICT. <http://www.einaudi.cornell.edu/conf/2004/ict/>

22 - 24 November 2004, Role and Place of Media in the Information Society in Africa and the Arab States, Marrakech, Morocco. This is an International Conference as a follow-up to the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) organized by Orbicom, the International Network of UNESCO Chair in Communication, the Ministry of Communication and the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Telecommunications of the Kingdom of Morocco, with the support of the Federal Office of Communication (OFCOM), Switzerland, UNESCO and the Department of Public Information of the United Nations. <http://www.orbicom.uqam.ca/mediaconference/index.html>

1 - 5 December 2004, ICANN Meeting, Cape Town, South Africa. UniForum SA, in association with the South African Department of Communication and the South African Domain Name Authority, is the official host of the ICANN December 2004 meeting to be held at the Cape Town Convention Centre in South Africa. <http://www.icanncapetown.co.za/>

9 – 10 December 2004, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, Meeting of the 4th African Technical Advisory Committee (ATAC). The African Technical Advisory Committee (ATAC) is the body responsible for advising ECA and its implementing partners on programmes, projects and areas of emphasis for the AISI, as well as playing an advocacy role, identifying best ICT practices, and assisting ECA mobilize resources for its work programme. The new members, appointed by the ECA Executive Secretary are leading African ICT experts and professionals representing the following areas: the Diaspora, private sector, civil society, as well as sector interests such as education, health, infrastructure and governance. Membership of ATAC is renewed every two years,

and this is the fourth such committee since its creation in 1997. <http://www.uneca.org/aisi/atac.htm>

2 - 4 February 2005, WSIS Africa Regional PrepCom, Accra International Conference Centre, Accra, Ghana. The African Regional Preparatory Conference for the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) will be held from 2 to 4 February 2005 in Accra, Ghana. The theme for the conference is: Access, Africa's key to an inclusive Information Society. The conference will be preceded by pre-Conference workshops from 29 January to 1 February 2005. The Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) will coordinate the conference. <http://www.uneca.org/aisi/accra2005/>

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Africa Electronic Privacy and Public Voice Symposium will be held in Cape Town, South Africa at the Nelson Mandela Gateway to Robben Island, on December 6, 2004 in conjunction with the ICANN meeting. The purpose of this Symposium is to bring together African NGOs, technical experts and policy makers to discuss Privacy, the World Summit on the Information Society and the policy development of Information and Communication Technologies. It is an opportunity for the public voice to be heard on issues such as safeguarding electronic privacy and protecting online speech, as well as African perspectives on Internet governance and the World Summit on the Information Society. The event will be split into three sessions. Participants are encouraged to [submit papers](#) on African perspectives on global Internet Governance,

African Internet Governance, or data protection or free expression online in Africa; papers will be posted on the web site before the symposium. More

<http://www.thepublicvoice.org/events/capetown04/default.html>

Training Open Day. To create awareness of the importance of ICT training for CSOs, and to highlight SANGONeT's work in this regard, SANGONeT will be hosting an open day of its ICT Training Centre in Braamfontein on Monday, 8 November 2004. The event will be held at SANGONeT's Braamfontein office (Ground Floor, 76 Juta Street in Braamfontein). A map of the venue is available on request. The event will start at 10h00 and conclude by 15h00. More <http://sangonet.org.za/snsite/index.php?option=content&task=view&id=55&Itemid=>

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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