



*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.....

**PICTA Members @ WSIS II.** A number of activities are underway coordinated by various PICTA members to ensure Africa's active participation in the second phase of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS 2005) which will be held from 16 – 18 November 2005 in Tunis, Tunisia.

### Events organized by ECA and its partners:

Monday, 14 November 2005

- \* SDC-IDRC Meeting: "What's Next After WSIS?"
- \* Promoting African Research and Education Networking (PAREN), Association of African Universities/IDRC/Other partners, 8:30 – 17:00 hrs

Tuesday 15 November 2005

- \* Promoting African Research and Education Networking (PAREN), Association of African Universities/IDRC/Other partners, 8:30 – 17:00 hrs
- \* Workshop on Measuring the Information Society, 9:00 – 17:00 hrs in partnership with UN Regional Commissions, UNCTAD, UN ICT TF, UNESCO, ITU, OECD, etc.
- \* Telecenter Leaders Forum – The Grassroots experience, 12:00 – 14:00 organized by IDRC
- \* ECA/IICD iConnect Africa launch

Wednesday 16 November 2005

- \* UN Regional Commissions Roundtable 1 - Regional Perspectives for the Global Information Society, 14:00 – 15:30 hrs, coordinated by ECA
- \* UN Regional Commissions Roundtable 2 - Promoting the participation of women in the Information Society and the knowledge-based

economy, 16:00 – 17:30 hrs, coordinated by ESCWA

- \* AU-ECA Discussion on Regional Plan of Action, 9:00 - 10:30 hrs
- \* ePoINet Africa (Industry Canada-ECA) Event, 10:30 - 12:00 hrs
- \* Telecenter Leaders Forum – The Grassroots experience, 16:00 – 18:00 organized by IDRC
- \* Partnership announcement, organized by ECA and AU, 17:00 hrs

Thursday 17 November 2005

### \* ECA/GKP Africa Events

- Panel on "Empowering African Youth Social Entrepreneurs", 17 November 2005, 10:00 – 13:30 hrs
  - GKP Panel on " Financing Knowledge in Africa" with ECA, AU, NEPAD, ADB and SDC, 18 November 2005, 14:00 – 15:30 hrs
  - Demonstration on Addis Ababa University (AAU) VarsityNet project on "development of multi-lingual content management system"
  - Demonstration on ECA's Virtual Learning Academy (vLAC)
- \* Telecenter.org launch, organized by IDRC, 14:00 – 16:00 hrs

Friday 18 November 2005

### \* ECA/GKP Africa Events

- GKP Panel on " Financing Knowledge in Africa" with ECA, AU, NEPAD, ADB and SDC, 18 November 2005, 14:00 – 15:30 hrs
  - GKP EXCOMM meeting, 18 November 2005, 18:00 – 20:00 hrs
- \* Telecenter Leaders Forum – The Grassroots experience, 10:00 – 12:00 organized by IDRC

### Other Events:

- \* AAU Conference on African Research and Education Networking, 14 – 15 November 2005
- \* Egypt's Success Story in Using the Debt Swap as a Funding Mechanism for ICT, Economic Research Forum, 16 November 2005, 13:00 – 15:00 hrs

- \* *La dynamique Technopolitaine et sa contribution à l'émergence d'une industrie TIC, Pôle El Gazala des Technologies de la Communication en collaboration avec Marseille Innovation, CEA, TMI, 2CW*, 16 November 2005, 17 :00 – 19 :00 hrs
- \* *Eradicating rural poverty by connecting rural communities, IFAD*, 16 November 2005, 9:00 – 11:00 hrs
- \* *Using Public Private Partnerships as a Mechanism for Development" with a special emphasis on Innovation and e-content, MCIT, Egypt*, 17 November 2005, 11:00 – 13:00 hrs.

In addition, ECA will setup an exhibition at the ICT4all Exhibition (<http://www.ict4all-tunis.org/>) to showcase and demonstrate the various services and products of its harnessing ICTs for development programme. Its exhibits include several ICT for development resources and outputs of its activities in building national capacities of member States in the use of ICTs for accelerated and sustainable development. ECA's exhibition stand (#1307.3) is located in the development and solidarity quarter.

For more info on these events and Africa @ WSIS: <http://www.uneca.org/aisi/wsis2005/index.htm>

**ECA and SDC organizing a better media coverage during the WSIS 2005.** ECA and the Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC) are collaborating to work with a group of African journalists, comprising of print and online writers from Highway Africa News Agency (HANA) and radio broadcasters from the World Association of Community Broadcasters (AMARC) Africa, to report on Africa's participation at the Summit. The main focus of this activity will be to promote African Information Society rapportage, predicated upon in-depth analysis of critical issues arising from the WSIS process, and in particular, issues that concern Africa's role and participation and the future of its emerging information society. The WSIS process in Tunis will be an important landmark in the growth and capacity of the journalists who would form the "WSIS Africa Agenda Newspaper" team and the onsite radio journalists from AMARC. The strategic partnership between ECA, SDC, HANA journalists and AMARC is instrumental in broadening the dissemination of the WSIS deliberations beyond ECA's and SDC's partners and audience. By engaging them, ECA and SDC will be tapping into a growing network of African media in alternative online, print and electronic media, as well as mainstream private sector and government media in Africa. More: Mercy Wambui ([mwambui@uneca.org](mailto:mwambui@uneca.org)).

**Global Center for ICT in Parliament to be launched at Tunis.** This is an initiative that the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations (UN/DESA), in collaboration with the

United Nations Information and Communication Technologies Task Force, intends to launch at the World Summit on the Information Society. The Centre will be launched during a panel Governance, Global Citizenship and Technology: the Role of Parliaments in the Information Society. This event, organized by the ICT Task Force and UN/DESA, will be held on Wednesday, 16 November 2005, at 11:00 a.m., at the Kram Centre in Tunis. The objective of this initiative is to contribute to the empowerment of legislatures around the world to better fulfill their democratic functions by reinforcing capacity of Parliaments to use ICT tools and to place them at the service of the institutional process, citizens' access to parliamentary activities, and inter-parliamentary cooperation. More: Gherardo Casini ([casini@un.org](mailto:casini@un.org)). <http://www.unicttaskforce.org/>

**Scan-ICT Phase II launching workshops planned for The Gambia and Cameroon.** ECA and the Governments of The Gambia and Cameroon are planning to launch the second phase of the Scan-ICT project soon. The workshop in The Gambia will be organized from 8 – 9 November and the one in Cameroon will be from 5 – 6 December 2005. Scan-ICT programme was launched in November 2000 as a collaborative project between the Acacia programme of the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and ECA, with financial support from the European Union (EU) and the Norwegian Agency for Development Co-operation (NORAD). The programme monitors the penetration, impact and effectiveness of ICT applications in pilot countries across Africa, providing added value to the AISI implementation at the national, regional and global levels. The countries selected to participate in the second phase of Scan-ICT with support from the Government of Finland include Cameroon, Ethiopia, The Gambia, Ghana, Mauritius, Mozambique, Rwanda, Swaziland and Tunisia. More: <http://www.uneca.org/aisi/scanict.htm>

**Study on e-commerce in North Africa.** As a follow-up of the Pan-African E-commerce Initiative (PECI), initiated in collaboration with the International Development Research Center (IDRC), ECA is conducting a study on e-commerce in North Africa with the financial support of the Government of Canada through the ePolicy Resource Network (ePol-Net) initiative. The study is also a follow-up to a recommendation made by the workshop on ICT and development of exchanges between the countries of the UMA organized in Tangier on 1-3 March 2005. The objective is to assess the status of e-commerce development in North Africa, identify new trends, challenges and opportunities and examine the feasibility of launching of a sub-regional e-commerce platform, which facilitates e-commerce activities within the sub-region. More: Mohammed Timoulali ([mtimoulali@uneca.org](mailto:mtimoulali@uneca.org)).

**VarsityNet II Project Review Meeting.** Following the successful completion of the activities of

VarsityNet II, a meeting was held on 25 October 2005 at Makerere University, Uganda to review the project and agree on the way forward. Generally, the second phase of VarsityNet has scaled up on research and development activities, and the knowledge and expertise accumulated during the first phase has been applied to a wider context. Through this phase, participating universities and their management, as the user of information, have gained an understanding of the impact of computer information systems on universities' administration and society at large. The working group including the Inter-University Council for East Africa, the IUCEA member institutions (Makerere University, University of Dar es Salaam) and ECA assessed progress made and demonstrated the software prototype developed. More: Thierry Amoussougbo ([tamoussougbo@uneca.org](mailto:tamoussougbo@uneca.org)).

**Internet discussion forum on Open Course Content for higher education.** UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning convened an Internet discussion forum on Open Course Content for higher education from 24 October 2 December 2005. More: <http://www.unesco.org/iiep/virtualuniversity/forums.php>

**ITU: West African regulators agree on common regulatory framework.** Regulators from fifteen West African nations have agreed to a common regulatory framework for their national ICT markets. The agreement marks a significant step forward for West Africa, which is seeking to create a single market based on the European Union model. More: [http://www.itu.int/newsroom/press\\_releases/2005/12.html](http://www.itu.int/newsroom/press_releases/2005/12.html)

**National ICT policies and strategies: regulation and public access to support dialogue among multi-stakeholders.** This workshop was held from 17 to 18 October 2005 in Dakar, Senegal. It was organized by the ECA, the French-speaking Institute of New Information and Communication Technologies (INTIF) as well as the governments of Canada and France, in the framework of the global e-Policy Resource Network (ePol-Net). The principal objective of the workshop was to reinforce the capacities of decision makers from French-speaking countries of West Africa in the development of policies and national strategies related to ICT access, through facilitating dialogue among regulators, lawyers, legislators, public decision makers, Internet Service Providers (ISPs), and representatives of regional organizations. More: <http://www.epolafrica.org/psntic/>

#### **OTHER NEWS..... OTHER NEWS.....**

**The Ghana Internet Exchange (GIX) launched.** On Tuesday 18th October 2005, the entire Internet

fraternity in Ghana gathered at the Ghana India Kofi Annan Centre of Excellence in the company of the Hon. Minister of Communication and the French Ambassador to Ghana to officially launch the Ghana Internet eXchange. The Ghana Internet eXchange (GIX) is the facility, which keeps Ghanaian Internet traffic in Ghana. GIX allows local Internet Service Providers and Network Operators to easily exchange traffic within Ghana, while improving connectivity and services for their customers. More: <http://www.gixa.org.gh>

**SANGONet launches South African NGO portal.** The Southern African NGO Network (SANGONet) has launched a new Internet portal for and about the NGO sector in South Africa. This portal is primed to become the gateway to the South African NGO sector, boasting the most comprehensive, validated and easily searchable NGO directory in the country, containing information about more than 2 500 organisations. This directory is augmented by wide ranging and diverse information for and about the NGO sector, including general news, press releases, campaigns, vacancies, event calendars, case studies, toolkits and research reports. More: <http://www.sangonet.org>

**Media silence on ICT policy issues in six African countries.** Researchers at Rhodes University in South Africa conducted a study to gauge the quality of media coverage of contemporary ICT policy issues in policy-influential media in Africa. The report includes country studies from in-country research conducted in Kenya, Mozambique, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Nigeria, Ethiopia, and Senegal. The authors found that the media in general show little interest in ICTs. Ethiopia was the only country that showed a significant amount of coverage during the study period, including letters to the editor. In all of the media monitored, ICT coverage – whether in an ICT excerpt or in the main newspaper – showed no analysis or critique of ICTs or the ICT sector, pointing to a lack of understanding in the media of ICT policy issues in general. More: <http://www.eldis.org/cf/search/disp/DocDisplay.cfm?Doc=DOC19292&resource=f1ict>

**The Zambian Chawama Youth Project brings life skills to local youth and women through ICTs.** Situated in the heart of Lusakas Chawama Township, the Chawama Youth Project has purposed to change the lives of youth once dormant into viable self-reliant and respectable people. More: <http://www.iicd.org/articles/iicdnews.2005-10-14.1728774469>

**Computer Network to Link 600,000 African Schools – Report.** At least 600,000 schools in Africa will be connected to one another via a computer network that can help African kids catch up with latest development of science and technology, Xinhua reported. The first phase of the programme

would be rolled out in 20 countries including South Africa, Mozambique, Ethiopia, Mauritius, Uganda, Mali and Cameroon, South Africa's government news agency BuaNews said on 25 October 2005. More: <http://allafrica.com/stories/200510270430.html>

**Africa Source II - Free and open source software for local communities.** Africa Source II will be an eight-day hands-on workshop aimed at building the technical skills of those working with and within NGOs on the continent. The workshop will take place in Kalangala, Uganda - Jan 08-Jan 15, 2006. More: <http://www.tacticaltech.org/africasource2>

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

**2 - 4 November 2005, Workshop on Harmonization of ICT policies and regulatory frameworks in ECOWAS, Accra, Ghana.** The main objectives of the workshop is to discuss and set a framework for the development of a harmonized ICT policy and strategy in the ECOWAS sub region. The strategy will include the promotion of ICT usage for regional economic integration, enhancement of connectivity and access to ICT services among and within the member States and development of applications and content for the sub-region, while encouraging public-private partnerships. More: Mohammed Timoulali ([mtimoulali@uneca.org](mailto:mtimoulali@uneca.org)).

**3 November 2005, Fill-the-Gap III - inspired by the World Summit on the Information Society, The Hague, The Netherlands.** For the third time Hivos, Oneworld Netherlands and IICD present: Fill-the-Gap! This public event is focused on themes related to the UN summits on the Information Society (WSIS) in Geneva (2003) and Tunis (November 2005). Through provoking statements interesting guest speakers – and the audience – will discuss whether the right to information is in fact a human right, and to what extent e-governance indeed contributes to democracy. At the 'ICT4D exhibition' visitors will find a wide variety of activities, where they can see, hear and experience what the 'Information Society' means in practice. More: <http://www.iicd.org>

**4 - 5 November 2005, International conference Preserving the Digital Heritage, The Hague, The Netherlands.** The Netherlands National Commission for UNESCO and the Koninklijke Bibliotheek, National Library of the Netherlands, organise an international conference 'Preserving the Digital Heritage: Principles and Policies', which will be held in The Hague, Friday 4 November and Saturday 5 November 2005. The conference is focusing on issues of interest for higher management in libraries, archives and museums, and other policy makers in the field of information and culture. The programme and registration form can be downloaded from: [http://www.unesco.nl/main\\_6-3.php](http://www.unesco.nl/main_6-3.php)

**7 – 11 November 2005, Human Resources for Information and Communication Technologies (HR4ICT), Tront, Canada.** Organized by the Commonwealth Telecommunications Organization (CTO), the event will gather Human Resources experts from telecoms and other ICT organizations to share views and adopt solutions for continuous provision and upgrade of their human capital and skills profiles in a constantly changing technological environment. More: <http://www.cto.int/hr4ict/>

**10 -11 November 2005, Libraries – the Information Society in Action, Alexandria, Egypt.** This is a WSIS side event, which is organized by the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) in cooperation with the Bibliotheca Alexandria and supported by several sponsors. The side event will present some of the best practices from libraries around the world in the areas of health, education and training, media literacy, preservation of cultural heritage and disaster preparedness. More: <http://www.bibalex.org/wsisalex/>

**13 – 15 November 2005, Past, Present, and Future of Research in the Information Society, Tunis, Tunisia.** This event will examine the role of research and the production of knowledge in the information society, with special emphasis on developing areas of the world. Core issues of the conference lie at the intersection of Science and Engineering, Information and Communication Technologies, and Development. More: <http://worldsci.net/>

**15 – 18 November 2005, Telecentre Leaders Forum @ ICT4all in Kram WSIS Tunis.** IDRC's telecentre.org program in conjunction with its partners is organizing a Telecentre Leaders Forum at the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), Tunis in November 2005. The Forum is meant to provide a unique opportunity for telecentre practitioners, policy makers and researchers to learn, share and collaborate in advancing effectiveness and social impact of telecentres around the world. The Forum will consist of four 2-hour sessions focusing at the grassroots' experience; creating stronger Telecentre leaders; creating a Telecentre tipping point; and the future of Telecentres. IDRC's telecentre.org program, through GKP, is specifically sponsoring full participation of 16 telecentre and community technology practitioners from Africa, Asia and Latin America with unique and or inspiring stories/experiences in telecentre and community use of ICT. telecentre.org is an IDRC innovative public/private partnership program partnering with Microsoft Corporation Unlimited Potential Program, The Education Development Centre and the Global Knowledge Partnership. More: <http://www.telecentre.org/>

**16 – 18 November 2005, World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) 2nd Phase, Tunis,**

**Tunisia.** The road to Tunis entails a process of monitoring and evaluation of the progress of feasible actions laid out in the Geneva Plan and a concrete set of deliverables that must be achieved by the time the Summit meets again in Tunis in November 2005. Efforts are now being made to put the Plan of Action into motion and working groups are being set up to find solutions and reach agreements in the fields of Internet governance and financing mechanisms. These working groups will provide inputs to the second phase of WSIS in Tunis. Also, measures will be taken to bridge the digital divide and hasten the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals with the help of ICTs. More: <http://www.itu.int/wsiv/>

**11 – 14 December 2005, AfriNIC Third Public Policy Meeting, Cairo, Egypt.** This meeting, which is part of AfriNIC's policy development process, is its second meeting for 2005. It will be held back to back with the first African IPv6 event (hosted by the Egyptian IPv6 Forum). The sessions include LIR training (English), IPv6 Hands on Workshop, African IPv6 meeting, and AfriNIC public policy meeting. The meeting will be held at Mena House Oberoi, Pyramids Road, Giza, Egypt. More: <http://www.afrinic.net/meeting/afrinic-3/>

**19 - 21 December 2005, Workshop on convergence of technologies and impact on regulation in Central Africa, Douala, Cameroon.** The workshop aims at assessing the ICT regulation in the sub region, and proposing a suitable regulatory framework to contribute to the socioeconomic development in CEMAC sub region. More: Mohammed Timoulali ([mtimoulali@uneca.org](mailto:mtimoulali@uneca.org)).

## ANNOUNCEMENTS/RESOURCES

**GOLDEN BOOK: Stakeholder Commitments.** Following the initiative announced at PrepCom-2, and based on the decision of the WSIS Bureau, the Executive Secretariat and ITU invites submissions concerning new commitments that stakeholders have announced, or are planning to announce, during the Tunis Phase of the WSIS. The intention is to create a "golden book" to promote these new commitments to the media in a way that will complement those initiatives already underway, as recorded in the WSIS stocktaking database. More: <http://www.itu.int/wsiv/goldenbook/index.html>

**Help for summitters: WSIS Wire.** WSIS WIRE is an independent news service offering an updated survey of news and blog posts concerning the World Summit on the Information Society. The survey is categorized by language (English, French, German), topic, region and publication type. More: <http://www.wsiv-wire.net>

**MDG monitoring and reporting: a review of good practices.** This booklet, based on a review of 98

national Millennium Development Goal reports, presents good practices in MDG Monitoring and Reporting. By highlighting country level examples from the national MDG reports, it serves as a guideline for countries to produce high quality MDG reports and to strengthen MDG monitoring systems. More: <http://www.undp.org/poverty/docs/mdgr-final-report.pdf>

**i-Witness: Journalists shaping the information society.** Journalists looking for free, up-to-date resources, news and debate on the information society can get all this and more on a new website, i-Witness. The i-Witness website is being launched by Panos London ahead of the final stage of the World Summit on the Information Society (Tunisia, 16-18 November 2005), and aims to help journalists worldwide get to grips with many controversial but often under-reported information society topics – from bridging the digital divide to controlling the internet. More: <http://www.panos.org.uk/iwitness>

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*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](mailto: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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