



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

GKP Africa & MENA regional workshop. The Global Knowledge Partnership (GKP) supported a regional workshop for its members from Africa and Middle East and North Africa (MENA) regions. As the coordinator of GKP Africa, ECA hosted this joint GKP Africa-MENA regional workshop in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 10 to 11 July 2006. The main purpose of the workshop was for the GKP Secretariat to help both regional networks to streamline and harmonise their proposed regional work plans to qualify for GKP Seed funding. In attendance were 9 participants from GKP Africa members including ECA, Fantsuam Foundation, Protege QV, SIDAREC, Azur Development, SchoolNet Africa, and IFLA; as well as a representative from NetCorps. GKP MENA had 6 participants representing members including DIDACTICA, Science and Arts Foundation, Sustainable Development Association, Ministry of Communications and IT of Egypt, and Agent Consulting Egypt. Discussions were generally centred on better understanding of the regional work plan development process. The outcome of the workshop was an agreement by all participants to update and submit revised regional work plans. More: <http://www.globalknowledge.org> OR Eskedar Nega (enega@uneca.org).

IICD: Monitoring and evaluating together. The International Institute for Communication and Development (IICD) recently held a five-day international conference on its Monitoring and Evaluation activities taking place in Africa and Latin America. IICD invited ten of its local partners from across Africa and Latin America to take part in an intensive Monitoring and Evaluation conference held in its offices in The Hague, The Netherlands, from 24 – 28 July 2006. Participants from English, French and Spanish speaking countries debated how best to solve the problems related to their work. Together they worked through a number of challenges and successes and learnt from each others experiences. According to one partner from Zambia, "the evaluation process is not a system of spying, but a means through which you can follow your progress".

Monitoring and Evaluation is important because it helps to find out what is functioning well in a project, and what needs improving. It enables IICD and its local partners to learn from past experiences. It is a continuous, participator and self-reflecting tool, which recently celebrated its 10,000 completed questionnaire. More: <http://www.iicd.org/evaluation>

ITU: International steps taken to build global Information Society - United Nations agencies to coordinate implementation of WSIS Plan of Action. Implementation of the outcomes of the recently concluded World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) gathered momentum with the launch of the United Nations Group on the Information Society (UNGIS). High-level representatives of twenty-two UN agencies met on 14 July 2006 at ITU Headquarters in Geneva under the chairmanship of ITU Secretary-General Yoshio Utsumi to facilitate the process. UNGIS will serve as an interagency coordinating mechanism within the UN system to implement the outcomes of WSIS. The Group will enable synergies aimed at resolving substantive and policy issues, avoiding redundancies and enhancing effectiveness of the system while raising public awareness about the goals and objectives of the global Information Society. UNGIS will also work to highlight the importance of ICTs in meeting the Millennium Development Goals. To maximize its efficiency, the Group agreed on a work plan in which it would concentrate its collective efforts each year on one or two crosscutting themes and on a few selected countries. More: http://www.itu.int/newsroom/press_releases/2006/NP_05.html

Bellonet at the first Open Curriculum meeting. Bellonet took part in the first Open Curriculum meeting, held at the Centre for Social Innovation in Toronto, Canada on June 12 & 13, 2006. The Open Curriculum is an initiative that seeks to develop better approaches to peer production and collaborative development in the open curriculum space. The objectives for this first meeting were to:

- define the raison d'être for open curriculum, mapping out what works and what doesn't
- share each of our visions and plans for open curriculum efforts
- zoom in on common ideas and new techniques that we can play with together
- identify benefits for tracking and supporting on each other's projects

- explore ongoing collaboration and knowledge sharing, and agree on milestones for checking in

Reflecting the spirit of the initiative, the meeting was collaboratively documented "as it happened". More: <http://wiki.tsf.org.za/shuttleworthfoundationwiki/OpenCurricMeetingOne>

NEWS: ECA Activities

Sierra Leone Validates the NICI Policy and Plans.

About 70 participants drawn from sectors ministries, departments, agencies, NGOs, media, civil society representatives attended the National Information & Communication Infrastructure (NICI) Policy validation workshop organized by the NICI core group in collaboration with the ECA on 30 June - 2 July 2006 in Freetown, Sierra Leone. This workshop presented participants with an opportunity to discuss and adopt a draft NICI Policy and Plan for Sierra Leone. The process was initiated by the Ministry of Development and Economic Planning (MODEP) and ECA provided the necessary support and technical assistance with support from the Government of Finland. The NICI process in Sierra Leone focused on recognizing the areas where ICT would contribute to attaining the overall objective of the PRSP, Vision 2025 and MDGs in the country. The follow-up activities agreed upon by the stakeholders during the workshop included the presentation of the validated NICI policy plans to the highest authority for its endorsement as a national policy document. The participants also agreed to ensure political support for the endorsement of the NICI Policy and its implementation through collaboration among academia, media and civil society organizations seeking international and national partnerships and networking. The workshop proposed a national institutional mechanism to coordinate NICI activities under the Office of the President to ensure the highest priority given to the NICI activities by all concerned. More: <http://www.uneca.org/disd/news/0719200601dnadisd.asp>

Mid-term review meeting of e-commerce project in North Africa. ECA's Development Information Services Division (DISD) and its sub-regional office in North Africa (SRO-NA) organized a meeting from 29-30 June 2006 in Rabat, Morocco to conduct a mid-term review of the e-commerce project in North Africa. Representatives of UMA (Union du Maghreb Arabe) and consultants from Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia participated in the meeting. Based on the presentations on national studies and UMA's needs and perspectives, a work plan has been established for the finalization of the national studies, preparation of a publication on the best practices on e-commerce in the region, and the preparation of the platform specifications. The results of the study will be presented to a joint ECA/UMA workshop, to be

organized in November/ December 2006 in Rabat. More: Mohamed Timoulali (mtimoulali@uneca.org).

Training course prepares Africa for the UN

Internet Governance Forum. A training course on Internet Governance (IG) for African policymakers was organized from 2 – 6 July 2006 at the UN Conference Centre in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The course was organized by ECA in collaboration with the Diplo Foundation, the Global ePolicy resource Network (ePol-NET) and the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN). Close to 35 African Permanent Secretaries, directors, advisors, and experts participated in the course. Countries represented include Angola, Cameroon, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Liberia, Libya, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sudan, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The training was aimed at developing the skills and knowledge required to participate meaningfully in the global debate on IG and ICT for Development, in particular the use and exploitation of the Internet to achieve the MDGs. A second course will be delivered during the second half of the year for Francophone African countries. Online courses will also be available before the end of the year. More: <http://www.uneca.org/disd/>

Workshop on "Harnessing the ICT Potential in Ethiopia".

The Ethiopian IT Professionals Association (EITPA) in collaboration with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and ECA organised a one-day workshop on 10 July 2006 at the UN Conference Center in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The workshop attracted more than 750 participants drawn from EITPA members, government, private sector, and civil society organizations. The event was aimed at creating greater awareness on the potentials of ICTs for Ethiopia's development by looking at very important issues such as infrastructure, human resources, applications and policy. Addressing the workshop, the Minister of Capacity Building, H. E. Mr. Teferra Waluwa and H. E. Ms. Vicki Huddleston, Charge D'affaires, USA Embassy stressed on the importance and timeliness of such awareness raising exercises, and multi-stakeholders' consultations, while Ethiopia is engaged in a number of huge ICT4D initiatives. ECA also made a keynote address and a presentation focusing on the African context with regard to the development, formulation and implementation of e-Strategies and plans. More: Afework Temtime (atemtime@uneca.org).

Ethiopia: FOSS policy workshop. More than 150 participants including policymakers, Chief Information Officers from public and private sectors, decision makers from civil society organizations, media, and individuals involved in IT procurement attended a one day Free and Open Source Software (FOSS) policy workshop held on 21 July 2006 in Addis Ababa, organized by the Ethiopian Free and Open Source Software Network (EFOSSNet) in collaboration with Catalysing Access for ICTs in Africa (CATIA),

UNESCO, and ECA. The workshop presented participants with an opportunity to familiarize themselves with advantages/limitations of FOSS, avoid discriminatory tenders/procurement practices and created policy level awareness of FOSS. The workshop was part of a series of events consisting of a 9-days FOSS professional training, a 3-days FOSS Office training and a 1-day FOSS policy workshop. ECA provided the necessary support and technical assistance for these events, made live demonstrations of FOSS operating systems and applications and distributed more than 350 Ubuntu Linux CDs. More: [Girma Dessalegn \(gdessalegn@uneca.org\)](mailto:Girma.Dessalegn@uneca.org).

OTHER NEWS..... OTHER NEWS.....

GenARDIS: Knowledge-sharing on Gender, Agriculture and Rural Development in the Information Society. Partners and participants involved in the Gender and Agriculture in the Information Society (GenARDIS) Small Grants Fund met in Entebbe, Uganda from 3 - 7 July 2006. For five days, forty people gathered to share and learn from each other's experiences in implementing projects made possible through the fund. GenARDIS has supported innovative projects such as an agricultural information system to benefit women's groups in Benin, and testing the use of mobile phones among farmers in Trinidad and Tobago. In Burkina Faso the project focused on developing ICT skills among rural women and in Ghana the project focused on developing a gender approach to growing healthy vegetables. GenARDIS was initiated in 2002 to support work on gender-related issues in ICTs for agricultural and rural development in the Africa, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) region. It was developed in recognition of the constraints and challenges encountered by rural women in ACP countries with respect to ICTs, e.g. cultural and socio-economic factors that hinder women's access and usage of ICTs including radios, mobile telephones and computers, limited time availability to participate in ICT training, and scarce relevant information in local languages. The GenARDIS partners include the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation ACP-EU (CTA), International Research Development Centre (IDRC), Humanist Institute for Cooperation with Developing Countries (Hivos) and International Institute for Communication and Development (IICD). The event was coordinated by the Association for Progressive Communications (APC) and Women of Uganda Network (WOUGNET). More: <http://www.apcwomen.org/genardis/>

IP Justice Call for Participation at UN Internet Governance Forum. 24 August 2006: Deadline for Athens Workshop Proposals. The 30 Oct. - 2 Nov. 2006 inaugural meeting of United Nations Internet Governance Forum (IGF) in Athens, Greece provides plenty of opportunity for discussion on a wide variety

of topics related to "Internet governance". This is IP Justice's call for participation for civil society contributions to the Athens IGF meeting. Participation at the Athens IGF meeting can be through written contributions, workshop proposals, prepared video statements, and a "plaza" to showcase institutions and projects. Four Main Themes in Athens include Openness, Security, Diversity, and Access. The IGF Secretariat has issued a call for workshop proposals and template for submitting proposals on its website. 24 August 2006 is the final deadline for submitting workshop proposals in English. More: http://www.ipjustice.org/WSIS/IGF_051906.shtml OR <http://www.intgovforum.org/>

Internet governance debate poses unique global challenges. As the Internet becomes increasingly essential to politics, commerce and daily life, the debate over Internet governance has evolved from a niche discussion among technologists into a global controversy over who should set the rules for one of the world's most vital resources. Three policy briefs have been prepared by the Centre for Technology and Democracy. More: <http://www.cdt.org/publications/policyposts/2006/13>

Bandwidth pricing should be transparent. (*Russell Southwood - Balancing Act*) -- Over 30 policy-makers, regulators and operators met in Johannesburg recently to discuss what will happen when the self-awarded monopolies of Africa's SAT3 consortium members comes to an end in June 2007. This is the first time policy-makers and regulators have come together to address issues that affect more than one country, writes Russel Southwood. More: <http://www.balancingact-africa.com/>

African stakeholders prepare for IGF. Some forty stakeholders and professionals in the media and ICT sectors met recently in Saly, Senegal, to discuss ICT policies and African participation in internet governance. It was the first gathering in West and Central Africa to prepare African stakeholders for their participation in the Internet Governance Forum. The participants also continue to advocate the need for universal access to ICTs for development in Africa. The workshop was organised by the Panos Institute West Africa - PIWA (CIPACO project), in collaboration with AfrISPA (Association of African Internet Service Providers Associations) and ACSIS (African Civil Society for the Information Society). It was supported by the CATIA Programme of DFID, with the contribution of the Association for Progressive Communication (APC). More: <http://www.apc.org/english/rights/africa/>

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

2 – 3 August 2006, Swaziland Thetha Forum, Mbabane, Swaziland. The event is SANGONeT's second regional Thetha forum. These Forums provide NGOs with the opportunity to discuss ICTs, including challenges facing the NGO sector, highlighting and promoting practical benefits, opportunities and lessons learned. The forums highlight ICT policy issues and promote practical applications, and form part of SANGONeT's broader objective to increase the use and awareness of ICTs within the NGO sector in Southern Africa. More: <http://www.sangonet.org.za/thetha>

5 – 7 August 2006, ASIA–AFRICA Business Forum 2006 "Bridging the Trade Divide", Sharjah, United Arab Emirates. The primary aim of the Asia Africa Business Forum is to increase trade and investment flows into Africa and to encourage a transcontinental exchange of knowledge and expertise. AaAfBF contributes to the ongoing efforts to foster stable and sustainable economic growth and development in on both sides of the continental divide within a South-South framework. The event encourages technology transfers, privatization, joint ventures, franchising, sub-contracts, manufacturing contracts, financial investments, equipment provision and inter-regional trade. One of the targeted sector is ICTs. More: http://www.cipaco.org/article.php3?id_article=819

21 – 23 August 2006, Third annual African VoIP Forum, Lagos, Nigeria. With its unique combination of conference presentations and training workshops, the African VoIP Forum, to be held at Muson Centre, Victoria Island, Lagos over 21-23 August 2006, offers a high-powered educational opportunity for Africa's ISPs, telecom operators and corporate VoIP users. The main topics include the impact of VoIP on African voice markets, maximising international connectivity via a virtual service provider, and successful revenue generating VoIP deployments in high-growth markets - lessons from Iraq and Afghanistan. In addition, a series of workshops on VoIP related issues are organized. More: <http://www.aitecafrica.com>

28 – 31 August 2006, Seminar "Capacity Building for ICT Strategies and Planning", Maputo, Mozambique. The Centre of Specialisation in Public Administration and Management (CESPAM), a SADC institution set up in 2000, is organising this activity within its ongoing Executive Training Programme. The seminar will treat the subject of building capacity for ICT strategy planning and implementation and is intended for senior managers and policy makers in the civil service, state corporations and agencies as well as senior management from local government, professional associations and the private sector with an interest in ICT. This intensive management-development programme is intended to engage SADC policy and senior public-service functionaries in benchmarking their current state of maturity

concerning ICT strategy and planning processes; provide methodologies and templates to assist them in refining this process; and provide the contextual linkages at programming and funding levels, to initiatives sponsored by the SADC Secretariat, ECA, Commonwealth Secretariat and others. More: <http://www.cespam.net>

6 – 8 September 2006, IST Africa e-Government workshops for the SADC region, Gaborone, Botswana. This is the third in a series of four Pan-SADC e-Government workshops being held in Botswana in collaboration with the Ministry of Communications Science and Technology, Government of Botswana. This workshop will be delivered as a number of core sessions complimented by regional and local presentations by a number of guest presenters through sessions including the information management environment, legislative framework and governance, information management framework, process/records/document management, implementation strategies, and cross-sectoral information management. More: Mr. Kishore Naran (knaran@gov.bw).

ANNOUNCEMENTS/RESOURCES

New ECA Publication: African CSOs Speak on the World Summit on the Information Society.

The African Civil Society has engaged in the WSIS process in a resolute manner. From its early stages, when the notion of ICT for development was only a nascent idea to the very last days of the second phase of the Summit, the profile of the African Civil Society has been transformed, making them serious partners in building Africa's Information Society. In this publication, African CSOs share the basic knowledge that they have acquired in the WSIS process and present capital issues, fundamental questions in building a people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented Information Society. More: http://www.uneca.org/disd/documents/AfrCSOs_Speak.pdf

Deadline for the 2006 AISI Media Awards is 15 August 2006.

The deadline for application to the 2006 AISI Media Awards is 15 August 2006. The Award winners will be announced in September 2006. The AISI Media Awards were introduced in 2003 to encourage more informed coverage of the information society and ICT for development issues in Africa as part of ECA's Information Society Outreach and Communication Programme. The Awards are aimed at individual journalists and media institutions based in Africa that are "promoting journalism which contributes to a better understanding of the information society in Africa. More: <http://www.uneca.org/aisi/mediaaward.htm>

Twenty-Five Steps to Successful e-Governance.

Many e-governance projects are not succeeding or are facing bottlenecks. There is resistance to change or duplication of efforts in many initiatives. There are local language issues in some cases and lack of planning in others. Lack of infrastructure is a bottleneck in some countries while in others Universal Access is an issue. Sameer Sachdeva considers 25 steps to successful e-governance. More: <http://topics.developmentgateway.org/ict/rc/ItemDetail.do?itemId=1067070>

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 atemptime@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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