



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

infoDev begins survey and capacity building activities in Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific focusing on ICT use in education. The infoDev survey projects in Africa and the Caribbean will help to answer some basic key questions related to the use of ICTs in education. Initiated at the request of infoDev's donors, the surveys are meant to document the lessons learned from investment and activities, successes and failures related to ICT use in education in the past decade, in order to inform a number of policy dialogues and project preparation activities in the future. More: http://www.infodev.org/section/programs/mainstreaming_icts/education/ed_current_workplan/fiji_events/

Integration of ICT in the National Development Planning Framework of Uganda. The National Planning Authority, mandated to coordinate development planning, has taken ownership for the President's campaign promise to integrate ICTs firmly into development efforts including the Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP). It has taken up this task as a follow up of the Roundtable Workshop of November 2005, held in collaboration with I-Network Uganda and International Institute for Communication and Development (IICD). More: <http://www.iicd.org/articles/iicdnews.2006-08-31.8421623518>

African telecom company supports ICT development projects in Africa. The International Institute for Communication and Development (IICD) and Manobi, an African telecom company, are entering into a strategic partnership for the support of several ICT development projects in Burkina Faso, Ghana, Mali, Uganda and Zambia. Manobi and IICD will initially develop joint activities on existing projects. Manobi will offer support in many different ways, including assisting IICD's local project partners to use mobile phone technology to improve existing information services. Secondly, Manobi will advise local governments on the use of mobile phone technology to improve public information and to develop e-business. One benefit of this initiative will

be that farmers will be able to access market price information via text messages, Wireless Application Protocol (WAP) or the mobile Internet as well as by using the personal computer or personal digital assistant (PDA). This will result in farmers being able to negotiate better prices and subsequently to offer a supply according to what the market actually demands. More:

<http://www.iicd.org/articles/iicdnews.2006-08-29.6134308141>

Call for working together for long-term sustainability. The Association for Progressive Communications (APC) ICT policy workshop held in London recently ended with the call for linking national advocacy to global networks through collaboration and information sharing and working together for long-term sustainability. The workshop, attended by 18 participants from different countries, provided a unique opportunity to the national portal managers to learn from each other and share their experiences. The first day of the workshop mainly focused on understanding and mapping the ICT policy issues that relate to the APC's work. More: <http://www.apc.org/english/news/index.shtml?x=5039055>

NEWS: ECA Activities

Swaziland Cabinet approve the NICI policy. In May 2004, the Cabinet of the Kingdom of Swaziland created a 23 member multidisciplinary Task Team to develop an inclusive ICT Policy. The team was also entrusted with the task of coordinating ICT development in the country. The ECA provided technical and financial assistance to guide the team during the execution of its work. Cabinet approved the NICI policy in August 2006 and implementation planning has commenced. The Cabinet also approved the creation of a new Ministry responsible for Information Technology, Telecommunication, Broadcasting and Postal Services to spearhead ICT development in the country. More: Sizo Mhlanga (smhlanga@uneca.org).

2006 AISI Media Awards. ECA and its partners will honour outstanding African media professionals and institutions that made a mark in covering ICT4D issues in the continent. The Africa Information Society Initiative (AISII) Media Awards are given to journalists who tell the development side of the digital divide story, and who can show case examples of how ICTs

are making a difference in the African continent. More than 170 entries were received for the 2006, which recognises Information Society reporting by eighteen journalists, including nine winners and nine finalists in various categories. The award ceremony will take place on 12 September 2006 at the 2006 Highway Africa conference. More: <http://www.uneca.org/aisi/mediaaward.htm>.

ITCA/ISTD Capacity building for Ethiopian Customs Authority on Automated System for Customs Data. ECA's Information Technology Centre for Africa (ITCA) through the ICTs, Science & Technology Division (ISTD) has launched in early August the final training module in the first phase of the series of capacity building activities for officials of the Ethiopian Customs Authority. This training programme is geared toward supporting the implementation and sustainability of IT systems for which it is being upgraded. The program is divided into three phases. The first phase is aimed at building the skills of the customs officers in supporting computer hardware, operating systems and networking. The second aims at building the skills of the customs officers in web, database and application development technologies. The third phase will introduce IT project management and Geoinformation Services (GIS) tools for better tracking of goods and services. More: <http://www.uneca.org/disd/news/0803200601dnadisd.asp>

Knowledge Networks through ICT access points for disadvantaged communities. The UN Regional Commissions took the opportunity of their interactions in the WSIS process to strengthen collaboration and promote cooperation on new ICT projects. It was in this context that the UN Development Account agreed to provide funding for a joint project on "Knowledge Networks through ICT access points for disadvantaged communities" to be implemented in five continents. The main goal of the project is to empower poor and disadvantaged communities through the transformation of existing ICT access points in selected countries around the world into knowledge hubs of global knowledge networks. The project aims at increased engagement of target beneficiaries in disadvantaged communities (with an emphasis on women) in these knowledge networks. This involvement will serve to deploy relevant knowledge pertaining to key areas of sustainable development such as employment, education, gender and health. Throughout its activities, the project stresses the link between ICTs and development, including the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, in particular Goal 8. The first meeting of the Regional Commissions to kick-start the project is scheduled for October 2006 in Beirut, Lebanon. More: Aida Opoku-Mensah (aopoku-mensah@uneca.org).

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

South Africa: State must go open source. (SANGONeT). With government spending almost R3-billion per year on a single proprietary software vendor, the dominant position of proprietary software in the South African ICT market remains entrenched. SANGONeT and the Internet Society of South Africa support a change in government policy that will give meaning to its National Open Source Strategy. They have drafted a petition for endorsement by South African civil society organisations. More: <http://sangonet.org.za/>

Kenya: ICT Bill cracks down on computer crimes. (AllAfrica). The Kenyan government has finalised an ICT Bill that also addresses offences linked to computer crimes. Amongst other things, the Bill will make it a criminal offence to programme mobile phones using computers. More: <http://allafrica.com/stories/200608280068.html>

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

11 – 13 September 2006, ICT-Learn 2006 "Towards a Knowledge Society", Cairo, Egypt. Organised by Human and Technology Development Foundation (HDF), the main objective of the Fifth International Internet Education Conference is meeting the networking needs of the international e-learning and distance education providers. The annual ICT-Learn conference is the key networking venue for strategists and practitioners from Middle East and North Africa and all over the world. The ICT-Learn 2006 International Conference will feature the issues we face and the strategies we use to meet the challenges of teaching and learning in a variety of circumstances. The theme accommodates the diverse situations in which we exercise our respective mandates. Conference themes include e-learning: design, development and delivery; Open Source, open content and online learning; quality assessment, measurement and evaluation of e-learning; and policy issues and large scale take-up of e-learning. More: <http://www.distant-learning.net/index.shtml>

11 – 13 September 2006, Highway Africa, Grahamstown, South Africa. More than 500 journalists from 40 African countries will be attending the annual Highway Africa Conference from 11 to 15 September 2006 in Grahamstown, South Africa to discuss issues relating to the impact of the Internet and digital technologies on journalism, media and society in Africa. This year's Highway Africa marks its 10th anniversary. Billed as the biggest gathering of African journalists in the world, the conference will be a time for critical reflection on the role that new media has played - and will play - in democracy and development. The conference will include several side events such as book launches, exhibitions, training workshops and meetings of various groups and forums. During the event, a number of awards,

including ECA's AISI media awards will be presented. More: <http://www.highwayafrica.ru.ac.za/>

14 – 15 September 2006, Preparatory meeting of the High Level Committee (HLC) on policies and regulatory frameworks favourable to the development of telecommunication and ICT networks and services in Africa, Nairobi, Kenya.

The above-mentioned meeting will take place under the auspices of the African Union (AU) and at the invitation of the African Telecommunication Union (ATU) in Nairobi, Kenya. This is a follow up meeting to the first one held at the AU in August 2006. Representatives from national, regional and international organizations from all stakeholders are expected to participate in the meeting. Some of the topics to be discussed include ICT and telecommunications policies, legal and regulatory frameworks, institutional framework and capacity building, and telecommunications and ICT networks and services to reach the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). More: <http://www.atu-uat.org/> OR <http://www.atu-uat.org/>

18 – 21 September 2006, Preparatory Meeting on Internet Governance - "Africa: On the Road to Athens", Cairo, Egypt.

During the training workshop on IG that took place in Addis Ababa under the auspices of ECA in July 2006, the African Group expressed their wish to meet before the First Internet Governance Forum (IGF) to be held in Athens, Greece from 30 October to 2 November 2006. The decision was made in order to share expertise and articulate views on this issue at a regional level before the international fora. The meeting is co-sponsored by the National Telecommunication Regulatory Authority (NTRA) of Egypt and the Diplo Foundation of Malta. Participants will tackle important IG issues including the themes for the IGF, the relevant diplomatic preparations, the relevant diplomatic preparations, the main IG instruments as well as the main conceptual approaches, principles and analogies used in the IG debate. More: <http://www.ntra.gov.eg/english/main.asp>

25 – 26 September 2006, GKP EXCOMM Meeting, New York, USA. This event is GKP's official meeting of its Executive Committee. Participation is with GKP's official representation. More: <http://www.globalknowledge.org>

10 – 12 October 2006, the second Connecting Rural Communities Conference, Abuja, Nigeria.

Organised by the Commonwealth Telecommunications Organisation (CTO), the event will be hosted by the Nigerian Ministry of Communications. This is the second in a four-event series, which focuses on the development of ICTs and in particular the progress, which is being made on connecting rural communities. The agenda will cover several topics essential to enhancing company's understanding of the market, including latest regulatory initiatives for promoting ICTs in rural areas; marketing strategies to drive rural revenues;

best practice case studies of successful rural communications projects; an overview of the variety of current and upcoming ICT technologies for connecting rural communities; how ICTs can be used to deliver e-health, e-education, e- agriculture, e-government and e-commerce to rural areas; future financing mechanisms for setting up rural communications; Governments' plans to expand rural ICT access; and developments on mobile and satellite communications.

<http://www.cto.int/crafrica06/>

16 – 20 October 2006, Workshop on the formulation and the implementation of the ICT policies in Africa, Dakar, Senegal.

In the framework of their common activities as a follow up to the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), ECA, l'Organisation internationale de la Francophonie (OIF), the USAID, the NetTel@Africa network as well as the governments of the UK and Canada in collaboration with the Ministry of telecommunications and new technologies of Senegal, are organizing this workshop under the theme "formulation and implementation of ICT policies in Africa". The workshop is organised for French-speaking African countries. It constitutes the second of a series of four seminars having to be held in the various regions of Africa. Participants include the representatives of Governments, regulators, institutions in charge of implementation of national ICT policies, operators and service providers, associations of the consumers, private sector, civil society, research institutions, development partners, etc. More: Makane Faye (mfaye@uneca.org).

ANNOUNCEMENTS/RESOURCES

ECA/DISD renamed ISTD/ECA. As a result of the restructuring at ECA, the former Development Information Services Division (DISD) of ECA has been renamed ICTs, Science and Technology Division (ISTD) since July 2006. The work programme of the division remains the same, focusing on the implementation of the African Information Society Initiative (AISI), with additional S&T component. Ms. Aida Opoku-Mensah is the Officer-In-Charge of the ISTD, and the contact details of the division remain unchanged. More: Aida Opoku-Mensah (aopoku-mensah@uneca.org).

APC Chris Nicol Prize 2007 for FOSS. Nominations called for the APC Chris Nicol FOSS Prize, which recognises initiatives that are making it easy for people to start using free and open source software (FOSS). The prize will be awarded to a person or group doing extraordinary work to make FOSS accessible to ordinary computer users. The APC FOSS Prize has been established to honor Chris Nicol, a long time FOSS advocate and activist who for many years worked with APC. APC is looking for initiatives that improve the accessibility to, knowledge of and/or usability of FOSS, are user-oriented, are

documented so that others can learn from and replicate the model, and have demonstrable impact and have increased the number of people using FOSS on a day-to-day basis. The Prize is open to any person or group anywhere in the world who supports or promotes user-oriented free and open source software. The application form must be completed in either English or Spanish however there are no language restrictions regarding the language of the project. Small-scale activities are encouraged to apply. The Prize: US\$ 4,000.00 may be shared by up to two initiatives at the jury's discretion. Deadline for nominations is 30 March 2007. More: <http://www.apc.org/english/chrisnicol>

CBA-World Bank Award for Programme on Development Issues. For a radio or television feature that illustrates development issues. The programme must be more than a simple narrative. It must be engaging for a wide audience, and focus clearly on a development issue. Deadline: October 15 2006. More: <http://www.comminit.com/awards2006/awards2006/awards-1443.html> Contact: CBA Awards, Commonwealth Broadcasting Association, 17 Fleet Street, London EC4Y 1AA, United Kingdom, Tel: +44 207 583 5550, Email: award@cba.org.uk

UNESCO Internships. For students from a wide range of disciplines, to obtain professional experience at UNESCO Headquarters and Field Offices worldwide during a 1- to 4-month internship. Depending on qualifications, these internships relate either to UNESCO's strategic activities or to administrative or technical functions. Deadline: Rolling. More: <http://www.comminit.com/funding2006/internships2006/awards-1337.html>

Time machines wanted: ITU TELECOM opens competition to predict the digital future. ITU TELECOM WORLD 2006, the leading global ICT event, has launched a competition to find the industry's best future-gazers. The Digital Life Theatre Competition invites companies to submit a 2-minute DVD demo that outlines their visions for the future in a digital age. The four winning demos will be displayed on giant screens as part of the Digital Life Theatre at the heart of the ITU TELECOM WORLD 2006 exhibition from 4 – 8 December 2006 in Hong Kong. There will be four competition categories to capture the scope of digital life itself: Digital Life at Home; Digital Life in the Office; Digital Life in the field of Media and Entertainment; and Digital Life in Society. Competition entrants are asked to send their demos to the ITU TELECOM by 15 October 2006. The successful demos will be selected and announced by 16 October 2006. More: http://www.itu.int/WORLD2006/pdf/Competition_Overview.pdf

The UN Millennium Development Goals Report 2006. Six years ago, leaders from every country agreed on a vision for the future - a world with less poverty, hunger and disease, greater survival prospects for mothers and their infants, better educated children, equal opportunities for women, and a healthier environment; a world in which developed and developing countries work in partnership for the betterment of all. This United Nations report shows where we stand in 2006 toward achieving these goals. More: <http://mdgs.un.org/unsd/mdg/Resources/Static/Products/Progress2006/MDGReport2006.pdf>

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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