



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

ICT Best Practices Forum for West and Central Africa. Microsoft, in collaboration with the Government of Burkina Faso, the African Development Bank, and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, is organising the ICT Best Practices Forum for West and Central Africa, scheduled to take place from 7 to 9 June 2007 in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. The Regional ICT Best Practices Fora will serve as a practical way for high-level officials from the different regions in Africa to share their own specific experiences and demonstrate practical examples of successful technology solutions in their respective countries. It will also allow for such solutions to be more easily replicated (particularly given the skills shortfall in the region), and encourage an increase in technology investment overall. More: <http://www.ictbestpractices.net/>

Hivos and IICD extend partnership. On 26 April 2007, the International Institute for Communication and Development (IICD) and Hivos extended their partnership for a period of four years. Creating practical and sustainable solutions in developing countries that connect people and enable them to benefit from ICT is the goal of IICD and is one of the main themes for Hivos. The cooperation between Hivos and IICD, which started in 1999, has been extended until the year 2010. The partnership includes a total amount of 1.8 million Euro for the next four years. The combined activities of Hivos (www.hivos.nl) and IICD (www.iicd.org) will mainly focus on two countries, namely Ecuador and Uganda. The programme in Uganda is aimed towards developing and implementing an e-society model in which local non-governmental organisations and local governments are able to cooperate with one another more efficiently. More: <http://www.iicd.org>

Gender & e-Government Workshop to be held in Maputo, Mozambique. The workshop, which is scheduled to take place from 28 – 30 May 2007, is organised by the ECA, under the framework of the Global ePolicy Resource Network (ePol-NET), in

cooperation with the Mozambican Ministry of Science and Technology, and with the support of the Canadian ePolicy Resource Centre (CePRC) and the Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa (OSISA). The main objective of the workshop is to encourage dialogue among ICT and gender experts in countries with the aim of analysing and evaluating the efforts put in place by African countries to mainstream gender in national ICT policies, include a gender dimension in e-Government policies and programmes that address the specific needs of African women. It will also try to define a plan of action with the view of introducing and reinforcing the capacities of gender experts in the implementation of ICT policies and sectoral e-Government strategies with a gender dimension. This workshop is the second workshop in a series. The first one, for Francophone countries, was held in Tunis, Tunisia from 19 to 21 June 2006. More: Eskedar Nega (enega@uneca.org).

ECA/SDC/GKP organise African preparatory meeting to GK III on “Knowledge and Access”. The meeting, scheduled to take place in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso from 5 - 6 June 2007, will provide an opportunity for GKP Africa members as well as other stakeholders committed to promote information and knowledge for development in the Continent to debate on issues such as: market opportunities, knowledge as a public good, language and culture, inclusive solutions for women and youth, innovative technologies, etc. It is also expected that such an event will better prepare Africa to the global conference so that ICT4D and knowledge development activities in the continent can be showcased. A total of 80 to 100 participants are expected to attend, including ICT4D focal points, GKPA members, journalists, and policy makers. More: Eskedar Nega (enega@uneca.org).

NEWS: ECA Activities

The Fifth Committee on Development Information (CODI-V). The CODI-V meeting ended with a call on African governments to urgently create jobs in the information and knowledge society. A final report, adopted by participants at the meeting, noted that information and knowledge had emerged as fundamental economic resources and a factor of global competitiveness. “Lack of access to, and utilization of, information and knowledge are in this context, a source of poverty,” the report said. “The only way out of Africa’s predicament is to quickly

achieve the goal of becoming a key player in the Information and Knowledge Society.” The CODI-V meeting, hosted by the ECA from 1-4 May, had as its central theme “ Employment and the Knowledge Economy in Africa”. Four sub-committees looked deeper into the issue from the perspective of statistical data, geoinformation, libraries, and ICTs. African governments were urged to promote a culture of entrepreneurship and ensure the “buy-in” of the knowledge economy, particularly on the part of workers and employers who are most affected by the changes created by information technology. More:

<http://www.uneca.org/codi/codi5.htm>

African government innovation in information technology rewarded. Twelve innovative projects taking Africa forward in the field of information technology were rewarded for their enterprise at a glittering ceremony in Addis Ababa on May 1st. The first ever Technology in Government in Africa (TIGA) awards were handed out by the main sponsors of the event, the ECA and the Canadian government, in recognition of achievements that have led to changes at national, regional or provincial level. The awards fell into four categories: public service delivery to citizens or communities; improved health services through the use of ICTs; improved educational services through the use of ICT; and Public Private Partnership in economic and financial e-services delivery. Additionally, the judges – leading African experts in information technology – presented special awards for endeavours that did not fall into the categories but were nevertheless considered worthy of recognition. The winning projects were from Angola, Burkina Faso, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Morocco, Rwanda, and Senegal. More: <http://www.uneca.org/tiga/>

E-commerce the way forward for Africa, new book says. A new book, launched by the ECA, seeks to underline the importance of the burgeoning electronic and mobile commerce industry for Africa’s economic development. The book, ‘African E-Markets: Information and Economic Development’, is the second in a series issued by the Committee on Development Information (CODI) whose annual meeting took place from 1 – 4 May 2007 in Addis Ababa. It is co-published by ECA, International Books and the Centre for African Studies in Copenhagen. The book notes that ICT has unleashed a massive, cost-effective way of doing business. ICT accelerates the movement of goods, services, ideas and people, which fuels the globalisation process. Therefore the power of information to stimulate Africa’s economic potential cannot be underestimated. The publication looks at the role of issues such as the enabling environment, e-economics, the stakeholders and data in assessing the implications for economic growth, meeting the Millennium Development Goals and poverty reduction. Launching the publication, Aida Opoku-Mensah who heads ECA’s ICT and Science and Technology Division, noted that it was written completely from an African perspective by African

experts. She said it was aimed at practitioners and teachers. (Free limited copies are available to readers in Africa. Email your request to ecapubs@uneca.org, otherwise it can be ordered at www.amazon.com). More:

http://www.uneca.org/eca_resources/news/2007/070503emarkets.htm

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

A report on rural connectivity in Tanzania: options and challenges. This report looks at the options and challenges faced with regard to connectivity in Tanzania and gives an overview of types of connectivity available. Although rural connectivity is feasible in all areas of Tanzania, there are several challenges: The issue of last mile infrastructure, the cost of service, the ‘appropriateness’ of the type of services available and the support and sustainability of the service. The report was originally produced at the occasion of the SWOPnet/IICD workshop on rural connectivity, Tanzania, May 2006. More: <http://www.iicd.org/articles/RuralConnectivityTanzania>

Nigeria's First Internet Exchange Ready. Nigeria’s first Internet eXchange Point IXP, the result of the collaboration between the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) and the Internet Service Providers (ISPs), is ready for operation. A statement disclosed that the IXPs which is located in Lagos, Nigeria is set for commissioning and will be managed by private sector stakeholders on a not-for-profit basis. At the conclusion of the World Summit on Information Society (WSIS) held in Tunis in 2005, the need for an IXP for Nigeria became vital. President Olusegun Obasanjo put his weight behind encouraging the establishment of an IXP for Nigeria. This led to the Minister of Communications being issued a directive by the presidency to ensure the establishment of a Nigerian IXP within the shortest possible time. The aim of building a Nigerian IXP is to keep and interchange local Internet traffic such as e-mail, download of local website content, etc, within Nigeria and allow only international traffic to be exchanged at points outside Nigeria. More: <http://www.balancingact-africa.com/>

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

9 – 11 May 2007, IST-Africa 2007 Conference & Exhibition, Maputo, Mozambique. Part of the IST-Africa Initiative, which is supported by the European Commission under the Information Society Technologies (IST) Programme, dubbed as IST-Africa 2007 is the second in an Annual Conference Series bringing together delegates from leading commercial, government & research organisations, to bridge the Digital Divide by sharing knowledge, experiences, lessons learnt & good practice. Hosted by the Government of Mozambique and technically

co-sponsored by the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE), IST-Africa 2007 focuses on Applied IST research in the areas of ICT for Networked Enterprise, Infrastructure, ICT for Environmental Risk Management, eGovernment and eDemocracy, Technology Enhanced Learning and Skills, ICT for Inclusion, eHealth and International Cooperation. More: <http://www.ist-africa.org/conference2007>

10 – 11 May 2007, GK3 International Advisory Panel (IAP) Meeting, Lausanne, Switzerland. The GK3 International Advisory Panel (IAP) meets to advise GKP on the programme development for the 3rd Global Knowledge Conference (GK3), GKP's Event on the Future. More: <http://www.globalknowledge.org>

22 – 24 May 2007, 2nd SMEs Forum - "Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises in the Arab Region: Opportunities & Challenges, Tunis, Republic of Tunisia. Organised by SME Centre in cooperation with Ministry of Employment and Professional Integration of Youth – Tunisia. The Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises Forum aims at, exploring the new methods and techniques in developing Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) on one hand, and identifying the Role of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and the Chambers of Commerce & Industry in developing the MSMEs on the other hand. Moreover, this Forum aims at highlighting the Role of Human Recourses in credit decisions. The forum will provide the participants with new methods and techniques in developing (MSMEs). More: <http://www.aabfs.org/EB/SME2/Sme/EnIndex.htm>

28 – 30 May 2007, eLearning Africa 2007 - Building Infrastructures and Capacities to Reach out to the Whole of Africa, Nairobi, Kenya. The second International Conference on ICT for Development, Education and Training, aims to reflect on the efforts of African countries in setting up their national and regional information and communication technology infrastructure to create access to education, training and services for all. It will also look at how Africa is providing the capacities for all stakeholders to efficiently exploit the huge potential advanced telecommunication technologies offer for the benefit of Africa. More: <http://www.elearning-africa.com>

30 May – 1 June 2007, 10th Year Anniversary, AITEC Uganda: ICT Conference & Exhibition, Kampala, Uganda. Organised by AITEC Uganda, the exhibition will provide a platform for the country's growing population of ICT users in government and the private sector to assess latest technologies and the services offered by vendors and service providers. Over the two days of the exhibition an Enterprise Solutions Showcase will provide a presentation facility for exhibiting companies to

showcase their hardware and software products, services and solutions. More:

<http://new.aitecafrica.com/?q=node/561>

4 – 5 June 2007, East African Telecentre Leaders Forum (EA-TLF), Nairobi, Kenya. The theme of this third Forum is "Promoting ICT For Rural Development: Meeting The Movement Challenges". The Forum will be co-hosted in Kenya by UgaBYTES and Kenya Network of Telecentres (KenTel) in the Kenya district of Siayi. For online sessions of the event (14th - 25th May), subscribe to the UgaBYTES mailing list at <http://www.ugabytes.org> or http://ugabytes.org/mailman/listinfo/ugabytes_ugabyt.es.org The event is planned to run in two phases: online and face-to-face sessions. The EA-TLF is an event organised twice a year, with rotating venues within the sub region, and focusing on different themes. It is part of the global framework of Telecentre.org (www.telecentre.org), which includes gatherings that are focused on facilitated learning and sharing of ideas and solutions among telecentre practitioners. More: <http://www.ugabytes.org>

11 – 13 June 2007, Conference on Knowledge Management as an Enabler of Change and Innovation in Africa, Cairo, Egypt. The Global Development Network has for the past year, as part of a program focusing on Africa, organized workshops for research institutes and think tanks on Knowledge Management for Organizational Capacity. Much has been learned about the constraints and opportunities faced by research institutes in developing knowledge and disseminating it to policymakers and others who can benefit. The planned KM conference is designed to share lessons about these experiences to a larger audience and to more systematically examine the impact of KM within organizations and how KM is being used in specific sectoral areas. More: Sherine Ghoneim (sghoneim@gdnet.org).

ANNOUNCEMENTS/RESOURCES

2007 AISI Media Awards. ECA and its partners are pleased to announce the 2007 AISI Media Awards. The deadline for the 2007 AISI Media Awards programme is 15th August 2007. Entries can be made in the following categories: 1) The AISI-SDC-GKP Media Awards 2007 – Radio, Print, Television/Video, and Multimedia/Web Media; focusing on "Emerging People", "Emerging Technologies", and "Emerging Markets" in Africa, 2) The AISI-IDRC Media Awards: Reporting on ICT Research and Innovation as well as Reporting on ICT Policy, and 3) The AISI-IICD Media Award on Local Content Applications, and Local Content. More: <http://www.uneca.org/aisi/mediaaward.htm>

The Stockholm Challenge GKP Awards 2007 - a new initiative. The Stockholm Challenge GKP Awards 2007 is a parallel initiative to the Stockholm

Challenge 2008. The prizes in the new award will go to projects that demonstrate exemplary and innovative Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships in four Stockholm Challenge Award categories: Education, Culture, Economic Development and Public Administration. The Stockholm Challenge GKP Award 2007 winners will be celebrated both in Kuala Lumpur and in Stockholm. Twelve finalists, three from each of the four contested categories, will be sponsored to attend the 3rd Global Knowledge Conference - An Event On The Future (GK3) in Kuala Lumpur in December 2007. All other applicants for the Stockholm Challenge GKP Awards 2007 are also invited to participate. Their conference fee to attend GK3 will be waived although travel and accommodation for the event will be at their own expense. More: <http://gkp.stockholmchallenge.se>

World Bank online MDG atlas. The World Bank's new online atlas of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) is out. It is a neat application offering a visualisation of the MDGs and letting you explore the maps of key indicators for each of the eight goals. The atlas intends to make a wide range of data for over 200 economies easily accessible. Available in English, French and Spanish. More: <http://devdata.worldbank.org/atlas-mdg/>

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 atentime@uneca.org for inclusion in subsequent issues of the PICTA Bulletin. If you have any comments and/or suggestions, please contact:

*Eskedar Nega
Programme Officer
ICT Policy and Development
ICTs, Science & Technology Division (ISTD)
Economic Commission for Africa
P. O. Box 3001, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
Phone: 251-11-5445315
Fax: 251-11-5510512
E-mail: enega@uneca.org*