



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

Computers for Development. The International Institute for Development and Communication (IICD) officially joined forces with Computers for Development and sent 600 computers to Africa. This large shipment will greatly benefit rural communities; where lack of access to information often hinders sustainable development. The 600 computers were donated by Capgemini (a Dutch company that assists IICD with capacity building programmes) and will be sent to IICD's partners in Uganda, Burkina Faso and Zambia for local distribution. Once installed, the computers will be used in education and health projects: two areas, which sadly lack vital modern information. The computers will play an important role in the effort to promote the widespread use of ICT in the education and health sector. Not only will schools and hospitals benefit, community centres and training institutes are also involved so as to spread the benefit of this project to all those in need. IICD seeks to address local demand for computers to improve education, business development and the strengthening of knowledge networks. The computers will be delivered hand-in-hand with a capacity development programme in order to gain the most out of this modern medium. More: <http://www.iicd.org>

GK3 Programme taking shape. Thirty-two thematic sessions have been selected by the GK3 International Advisory Panel (IAP) to form the core conference programme out of over a hundred proposals submitted by GKP members and partners. Specific organisations have been designated as lead for each session and are in the midst of fine-tuning their sessions to ensure a successful, quality event that is the hallmark of GKP's Global Knowledge Conferences. An additional 20 sessions will be selected to complete the conference programme by early August. More: <http://www.globalknowledge.org>

ICVolunteers instrumental in Africa@home project, Volunteer Computing for Africa. Through its CyberVolunteers Programme, GKP Member ICVolunteers has been instrumental in the Africa@home project, mobilizing not only volunteers

and researchers, but also helping with partnership creation, logistics and documentation for the Volunteer Computing for Africa workshop. Participants from 18 African countries took part in a workshop on volunteer computing in Muizenberg, South Africa from 16 to 22 July 2007. The workshop's main objective was to plant seeds in different universities and academic institutions around Africa to create poles of excellence for developing volunteer computing projects, in particular applied to the most pressing health issues, such as malaria, HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis research and modelling. The AIMS (African Institute for Mathematical Sciences (<http://www.aims.ac.za>) workshop on Volunteer Computing for Africa introduced participants to the state-of-the-art open source software technologies behind distributed computing and cyber-volunteering on the Internet. Participants were able to gain hands-on experience with these technologies, so that they can harness the power of volunteer computers worldwide for their own research, or to support the research of their colleagues in universities and research labs across Africa. More: <http://www.icvolunteers.org>

UN Secretary-General endorses Connect Africa Summit in Kigali, Rwanda. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon gave his full support to the Connect Africa initiative, spearheaded by ITU and the Global Alliance for ICT and Development (GAID). The Connect Africa Summit will take place in Kigali, Rwanda, 29-30 October 2007 under the high patronage of President Paul Kagame of Rwanda and the Chairman of the African Union, President John Kufour of Ghana. Mr. Ban said that the initiative would help overcome the serious problem of the digital divide, which "is hampering the smooth and balanced development of our international community". The UN Secretary-General praised ITU for joining hands with other agencies to make a better future. "I hope we will work together to make this world more prosperous, more secure, more harmonious, and more developed through ICT," said Mr. Ban Ki-moon. More: <http://www.itu.int>

ECA and WHO to launch a study for Africa Health Infoway. Within the framework of the African Information Society Initiative (AISII), the ECA with support from the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and in cooperation with the World Health Organization (WHO) are commissioning a joint regional needs assessment and scoping study on the "AFRICA HEALTH INFOWAY: A district-based Public

health Information network and geospatial health system for African Health". The Africa Health Infoway's objective is to provide affordable access to reliable health information and knowledge for policy makers, providers and citizens; improve population health, by unifying public health surveillance systems, streamlining quality and health status monitoring; make epidemiological surveillance information available for analysis and use as soon as it is collected; and support data and knowledge mining. In order to discuss the data requirements as well as methodology of the study, ECA and WHO are organising a Needs Assessment Study workshop from 9 – 10 August 2007 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. More: Sizo Mhlanga (smhlanga@uneca.org).

NEWS: ECA Activities ECA Activities

South African stakeholders assess the use of ICTs in facilitating trade. A two-day roundtable to review a study on ICTs, trade and economic growth in South Africa was held from 30 – 31 July 2007 in Pretoria, South Africa. Over forty participants attended the roundtable drawn from various stakeholders including the ICT private sector, representatives from Department of Communication as well as Department of Trade and Industry, ISP Association of South Africa, regulator, telecom operators, commercial and development banks, and other government agencies. The roundtable is aimed at reviewing the country study conducted by a team of local consultants in the framework of the ePolicy Resource Network (ePol-NET) as well as the ICTs, Trade and Economic Growth Initiative, supported by the Government of Canada through the Canadian ePolicy Resource Center (CePRC). The consultants made presentations on the key findings and recommendations of the country study highlighting on assessments made regarding the potentials and niches for South Africa particularly SMEs in using ICTs to enhance and facilitate domestic and international trade. The study identified the existence of various policies and regulations addressing ICT business as well as trade facilitation in South Africa. Furthermore, the study indicated that the ICT sector was contributing over 5% to GDP with a value of 45 billion Rands in 2006. More: Afework Temtime (atemtime@uneca.org).

Swaziland NICI officially launched. The national ICT policy (NICI) of Swaziland was launched on 3 August 2007 in Mbabane in the presence of His Excellency Prime Minister Themba Dlamini and other high-level Government officials as well as a delegation from ECA lead by Ms. Aida Opoku-Mensah, Director of ICTs, Science and Technology Division. During the launch the Prime Minister said that ICT is an important tool in all development sectors including health, education, public services, as well as national security. He further encouraged Government offices to use ICTs to improve their efficiency and positively contribute to nation building.

The Prime Minister has given the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare until 30 September to install computers in all rural clinics to avoid communication breakdown and step up service delivery. Ms. Aida Opoku-Mensah on her part said that political commitment is an important ingredient to speed up the implementation of the ICT policy. She further commended the Prime Minister for officially launching the policy saying that it was an indication of political commitment like we are witnessing in Rwanda. More: Sizo Mhlanga (smhlanga@uneca.org).

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

Nigeria successfully launched satellite-NIGCOMSAT-1. The satellite was launched on 13th May 2007 at 5.01 pm Nigerian time. NIGCOMSAT-1 is a quad-band craft equipped with 28 transponders (14 in Ku band, 4 in C band, 2 in L band, and 8 in Ka band). The c-band foot print covers West Africa, Central and East Africa. There is no doubt that the satellite which has a service lifespan of at least 15 years shall help tremendously in boosting the diffusion of ICT in Africa. More: <http://www.nitda.gov.ng/>

Update on GAID Youth Forum. The GAID Secretariat set up a website on the GAID Global Forum on Youth and ICT, to be held in Geneva on 24-26 September 2007. It includes basic information on the Forum's purpose and on its content, as well as a registration process. The Global Forum market place will represent an opportunity to showcase of innovations and projects/initiatives that utilize ICT as a major component of the implementation. Requests to present projects and initiatives can be sent online to the GAID Secretariat at: <http://www.un-gaid.org/fr/gfyouth/marketplace/apply> More: <http://www.un-gaid.org/gfyouth>

Uganda's 79 districts to get e-link by 2010. Uganda's 79 districts will be online by 2010, the information and communications technology minister, Dr. Ham Mulira, has said. This follows development of the National Data Transmission Backbone Infrastructure and the Electronic Government Infrastructure projects. He said in order to implement national development programmes like the Poverty Eradication Action Plan and Plan for Modernisation of Agriculture, timely and relevant information must be available at all levels of implementation. "After recognising this catalytic role, the Government in 2003 adopted an ICT policy framework to ensure optimum utilisation of these technologies geared towards national socio-economic development," he said in a statement. Mulira said data and voice communication solutions are mainly provided by three companies; MTN, Celtel and Uganda telecom. However, the sector has been fully liberalised and more investors have been licensed. More: <http://www.newvision.co.ug/>

South Africa to invest \$700 million on a new submarine cable to cut Web costs. South Africa is planning a \$700 million (R5 billion) submarine cable to cut the costs of accessing high-speed Internet. The cable, to run from Durban to South America and London, will increase international bandwidth capacity. The initiative is being driven by the Department of Public Enterprises as an international leg of Infraco, the state-owned broadband infrastructure firm formed last year to lease capacity exclusively to Neotel for four years. But the international part of Infraco will be open to other telecoms firms including Telkom, which is said to be interested in a big slice of the project. Due to the lack of undersea cables, Africa has mainly relied on the Sat3 cable that is partly owned by Telkom. Sat3 members have exploited this by charging huge fees, which has led to strong criticism from the government as the high costs deterred foreign investments and led to slow internet roll-out in rural areas. Running parallel with the Infraco cable is the controversial Nepad Broadband, focussing on the east region. The Nepad Broadband was established after a fallout between the South African and Kenyan governments when they built the \$280 million East African Submarine Cable System (EASSy). More: http://www.busrep.co.za/index.php?from=rss_&fArticleId=3961653

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

21 – 24 August 2007, CTO: 2nd Annual Connecting Rural Communities Africa Forum 2007: Bridging the digital divide through sustainable ICT connectivity, Grand Regency Hotel, Nairobi, Kenya. Hosted by the Communications Commission of Kenya, the Forum will have pre-conference workshop on Tuesday 21st August 2007, and the main conference will be held from Wednesday 22nd August to Thursday 23rd August 2007, followed by Rural Services & Applications Focus Day on Friday 24th August 2007. This international event will bring together African government officials, senior figures from African regulatory authorities and international ICT experts who are leading the private sector connectivity drive. Participants will have the opportunity to discuss and analyse best practices, share case studies and debate crucial topics such as optimal regulation strategies to promote rural connectivity; creating the right environment to attract foreign investment; how to best harness and utilise ICT to deliver socio-economic benefits to rural communities; analyse current projects which seek to bridge the digital divide; and the opportunity to advance rural connectivity through mobile, internet and satellite and enhance access to key services, content and applications. More: <http://www.cto.int>

25 – 29 August 2007, APC-Africa-Women and Women'sNet Story Telling Workshop. The digital stories will focus on the experiences of women who

are content developers, librarians, archivists, journalists, mediators, translators, information activists, and who work in the field of ending violence against women. Participants of the workshop will take control of technology and tell their own stories using the digital storytelling medium. This process will help participants to locate themselves in the stories to better advocate for the rights, priorities and concerns of women in situations of violence. The digital storytelling workshop is hands-on and computer intensive, requiring commitment and willingness to develop a short, personal story; learn new software and edit a short digital video of five minutes in length. More: <http://www.apcwomen.org>

27 – 30 August 2007, WI-World Africa 2007, Michelangelo Hotel, Johannesburg, South Africa. In Africa, fixed-line infrastructure is lacking and there is a major problem with copper wire theft. Wireless communication is therefore a great alternative. More: <http://www.terrapinn.com/2007/telecomza>

1 – 3 September 2007, The UNESCO International Conference and Exhibition on Knowledge Parks, Muscat, Oman. The Conference and Exhibition provide a platform for key players around the world to help translate the concept of knowledge societies into concrete solutions for development. It sensitises policy makers to the value of specialized knowledge parks and knowledge hubs to support and drive economic development and capacity building. It creates opportunities for establishing regional cooperation towards building knowledge parks in developing countries, with a special focus on Africa, Arab States and Asia. The Conference objectives include a) raising awareness on how the ICT-based knowledge parks can help operationalise UNESCO's concept of knowledge societies; in particular, in developing regional policies, guide-lines and activities to promote economic and social development in developing countries; b) reviewing best practices of ICT-based knowledge parks in developed countries, with a special focus on leveraging their potential for developing countries; c) networking stakeholders to generate partnerships for new knowledge park initiatives and for establishing strategies to leverage ICTs and knowledge park experiences for building knowledge societies. More: http://portal.unesco.org/ci/en/ev.php-URL_ID=24158&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

1 – 3 September 2007, The International Youth Forum: Youth Speak, We Listen, Voices for Peace, Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt. Organised by the Egyptian Ministry of IT and Communication, the ICT theme of the conference aims at probing into the potential of ICT in peace through the eyes of youths and for the youths. ICT being one more instrument placed in their in an attempt to create a better world. In order to secure a constructive dialogue by and for the youth, at the ICT4Peace sessions, and throughout the conference, promising youth will be

invited through a number of key organizations and networks with a long history of work with young people. To further the dialogue between youth all over the world, the roundtables and sessions will be broadcasted to youth forums worldwide. Cisco and Microsoft will support the online coverage. More: ntewfik@mcit.gov.eg

2 – 4 September 2007, ICT-Learn 2007 Conference, Cairo, Egypt. Organised by the Human and Technology Development Foundation (HDF) the upcoming HDF International Internet Education Conference ICT-Learn 2007 will be held in Cairo Egypt from 2-4 September 2007. The theme will be 'Learning Anytime ... Anywhere'. The Forum will draw approximately 500 participants of whom 100 are from across Arab Region and internationally. Participants are innovators, decision-makers and leaders in distance education, using leading-edge technology to deliver cutting-edge programs. The Forum will showcase strategies for accessible, effective and innovative education; quality assurance in education; Technical and Vocational Education and Training to achieve access for all; and pedagogical implications of electronic delivery of education. More: info@hdf.org.eg

24 – 26 September 2007, Global Forum on youth and ICTD, Geneva, Switzerland. The Global Alliance for ICT and Development will be holding its Global Forum on Youth and ICTD: Youth and ICT as Agents for Change, in Geneva on 24-26 September. The Forum will provide opportunities to showcase your work and programmes in the area of ICT and Youth. The Marketplace is one of the official Forum sessions offering the opportunity to organizations and individuals to showcase their youth-oriented projects, present initiatives/case studies/slide shows, or demonstrate innovative applications of technology with the aim of raising awareness, sharing experiences, acquiring new partners and/or members, and finding potential sponsors. More: <http://www.un-id.org/en/node/655>

5 – 7 September 2007, iWeek Conference, Johannesburg, South Africa. ISPA and UniForum SA are organising and hosting this 6th iWeek, the Internet industry's premier conference. More: <http://www.ispa.org.za/iweek/2007/apply.shtml>

23 – 28 September 2007, AfriNIC-7 Public Policy Meeting, Durban, South Africa. The AfriNIC-7 public policy meeting will focus on Internet Governance and Policy Makers. This 6-day event will provide a public forum for the African Internet community and policy makers to discuss different aspects of the Internet on the continent, from network operations to internet resource management, policies and standards development, including an update on the deployment of IPv6. A one-day special session on 'Internet Governance in Africa and Policy Makers' for policy makers and regulators will be organised on 25th September 2007. The meeting will also be

sharing best practices and experience on the continent for a wide range of topics including Internet Exchange Points, Internet access costing and IPv6. More: <http://www.afrinic.net/meetings/afrinic-7>

1 – 5 October 2007, ICT AFRICA 2007, Kenyatta International Conference Centre, Nairobi, Kenya. ICT Africa is an annual continental information and communications technology conference addressing all aspects of ICT development in Africa. The conference is convened by NEPAD council in collaboration with the NEPAD Kenya secretariat. The 2007 event will be organized by Global Conferences, Cape Town, South Africa. More: rjacobs@globalconf.co.za

3 – 5 October, Infrastructure Partnerships for African Development (IPAD) Central Africa, Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo. iPAD Central Africa 2006 provides an opportunity to network directly with key partners. The event aims to facilitate regional planning and collaborations under one roof between government, the public sector and business. iPAD Central Africa 2006 is a one-stop-shop for investigating investment opportunities in DRC and the Central African region as a whole. More: <http://www.spintelligent-events.com/ipad-central2006/en/>

ANNOUNCEMENTS/RESOURCES

INET Africa Internet Governance meeting report. The report of the INET Africa Internet Governance meeting, which was held on May 4 in Abuja, is now available online at: http://www.isoc.org/isoc/conferences/inet/07/docs/INETreport_04052007.pdf

World Information Society Report 2007 Beyond WSIS. The second edition of the World Information Society Report: Beyond WSIS, published by ITU and UNCTAD, looks beyond WSIS to the creation of an inclusive, people-centred and development-oriented Information Society, open to all. The opening chapter looks at the challenges of measuring the ICT sector while chapter two examines progress in bridging the digital divide. Chapter three focuses on emerging trends in the information society worldwide and chapter four looks at national ICT strategies. Chapter five considers the threats to cybersecurity, while chapter six provides an update on WSIS implementation and presents a number of ICT success stories across the world. The report is accompanied by a series of tables providing the latest statistics on the development of ICTs worldwide. More: <http://www.unctad.org> OR <http://www.itu.int>

The 2007 AISI Media Awards CLOSES on 15 August 2007. 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>

Global Young Social Entrepreneurs Forum (YSEF) Competition CLOSES 15 AUGUST 2007. The Young Social Entrepreneurs' Forum is one of several highlights within GK3, GKP's Event On The Future: Third Global Knowledge Conference. The Forum will support 100 young social entrepreneurs to attend and to meet with funding organisations, experts, mentors, other stakeholders and the 2,000 participants. Young social entrepreneurs are young people (up to 30 years of age) who have set up innovative enterprises that aim to make revenue as well as positive social impact and that use Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) and Knowledge as part of their business model. GKP has also launched the Global Young Social Entrepreneurs Forum (YSEF) Competition, through which 100 young social entrepreneurs will be selected and sponsored to attend the Forum at GK3. This competition closes 15 August 2007. More: <http://www.globalknowledge.org/ysecompetition07>

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:

*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*