ECA Book on National Information and Communication Infrastructure highlights best practices in national ICT policies

Addis Ababa, 6 March 2008 (ECA) – The ICT, Science and Technology Division (ISTD) of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) proceeded on 6 March 2008, at the Addis Ababa United Nations Conference Center with the official launch of the National Information and Communication Infrastructure (NICI) book, a 106 page document that captures the lessons learnt after almost a decade of national and sub regional ICT policy-making. The launch took place in the context of the Science with Africa Conference which runs from 3 to 7 March at the joint initiative of ECA, African Union other partners.

The NICI book summarizes ICT policy processes in countries including Rwanda, Ghana, Malawi and Nigeria and intends to help other countries chart their own ways to bringing ICTs to the service of their development. It analyses the critical success factors and identifies challenges and obstacles that need to be addressed to ensure effectiveness and sustainability of ICTs as a tool for development. "It's ok to do ICTs. But what is needed is to make sure they don't remain policies" stated Ms Aida Opoku-Mensah as she was addressing journalists, ICTs experts and international partners attending the launch ceremony.

ECA has been deploying considerable efforts to promote ICTs for development, through the adoption, in 1996, of the African Information Society Initiative (AISI), which is an action framework to build Africa's information and communication infrastructure. So far more than 30 African countries have embarked on the development and implementation of ICTs policies and plans.

The NICI book benefited from the financial support of many partners including, European Union, the Government of Finland, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and others.

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