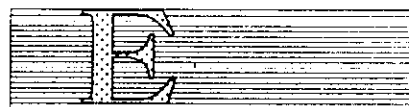


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**ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA**

Fourth Meeting of the Committee  
on Development Information (CODI IV)

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia  
23 – 28 April 2005

**REPORT OF THE FOURTH MEETING  
OF THE COMMITTEE ON DEVELOPMENT INFORMATION  
(CODI IV)**

1. The Fourth Session of the committee on development information took place in Addis Ababa during the period 25-28 April 2005 and was preceded by workshops on the 23<sup>rd</sup> and the 24<sup>th</sup> April 2005 during which the main questions of the CODI IV agenda have been explained and reviewed. An exhibition was also mounted for CODI IV.

### **Opening ceremony**

2. The outgoing Chair of CODI III, Uganda, opened the meeting. Ms Josephine Ouedraogo, deputy Executive Secretary (a.i) delivered the Speech on behalf the Executive secretary of UNECA, Dr K. Y. Amoako. Following that, Ms Aida Opoku-Mensah, Officer-In-Charge of DSID, presented the goals and objectives of CODI IV.

### **Election of the Bureau**

3. The Bureau for CODI IV was elected as follows:

Chair: Tunisia  
First Vice-Chair: South Africa  
Second Vice-Chair: Rwanda  
First Rapporteur: Ghana  
Second Rapporteur : Cameroun.

The following countries were also elected Bureau members for the Sub-Committees :

#### **Sub-Committee on Geo-Information**

Chair: Sudan  
Vice-Chair: Swaziland  
Rapporteur: Ethiopia

#### **Sub-Committee on Statistics**

Chair: Tanzania  
Vice-Chair: Tunisia  
Rapporteur: Ghana

#### **Sub-Committee on ICT/Libraries and Information Systems**

Chair: Nigeria  
Vice-Chair: Egypt  
Rapporteur: Tanzania.

After the installation of the new CODI Bureau, the Chairman of CODI IV, Mr Guellouz Ridha, delivered some remarks and invited the plenary Session to examine and adopt the draft Agenda and work program ( See Annex 1).

### **Theme for CODI IV**

4. CODI IV was held on the Theme: Information as an Economic Resource". The various Sessions were then devoted to examining Information as a strategic factor of production of goods and services.

The Keynote address was presented at the First Plenary session by Mr Moubarack LO, with responses on the perspectives of ICT, Library, GeoInformation and Statistics from respectively Dr Dayo Ogunyemi; Prof Mchombu Kingo; Prof. Peter Adeniyi and Dr Buleti Nsamukula.

Many other Plenary sessions and Sub-Committees meetings were held, covering the different points of the CODI IV Agenda.

At the end of its meetings, CODI IV adopted the following resolutions and recommendations.

## **RESOLUTIONS**

5. Taking into consideration the need to focus on the different aspects of the CODI mandate and deepen the examination of the specific problems related to these aspects;

Noting the absence of a specific body in the current structure of CODI dealing solely with reviewing of the work of ECA, and advising it on this area;

CODI decides to create a new Sub-Committee on “Knowledge, Libraries and Information Services for development” (CODI-KLIS), with the membership of Member States. CODI-KLIS would be in charge of:

- a. Proposing regional and sub-regional policy directions, in the field of Libraries and Information Services;
- b. Assist Member States in identifying national objectives and evaluating the progress at the national level, in the field of Libraries and Information Services.

The activities of the new Sub-Committee will become effective immediately after this CODI IV meeting.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **I. GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS**

**The CODI ;**

Considering that:

- a. information and knowledge have emerged as new economic resources and factors of global competitiveness;
- b. lack of access to information flows and knowledge systems and processes is in this context, itself a source of poverty;
- c. the only way out of Africa’s predicament is thus to, urgently, achieve the goal of becoming a key player in the Information Society;

Fully aware that the global economy’s transition to an information- and knowledge-based economy offers many opportunities to African countries which could enter this “new economy” by developing competitive advantages based on their history and on the substantive conditions with which they are familiar;

Noting that:

- a. the adoption of the African Information Society Initiative (AISI) in 1996 offers to Africa the necessary Framework to organise its path towards the information society;
- b. National Policy developments of various sectors of Information for Development, such as SDI, have been going independently from a national overall information policy;
- c. the African Union and New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) incorporate the development of information and ICTs as a key component in their Strategic Plan;

Considering further that:

- a. the Africa's development partners are becoming increasingly aware of the need to pay more attention to the development of information and ICTs in cooperation programmes, as witnessed by the inclusion of ICT's promotion as one of the 18 target areas for the eight objectives established in the Millennium Development Goals;
- b. the establishment of an enabling environment for the emergence of information-powered African economies presupposes the adoption of this imperative at the highest governmental levels and its specific reflection in economic policy frameworks;

**Recommends:**

**To Members States:**

- a. to develop, if not yet done, a National Information and Communication Infrastructures (NICI) strategy that would include all sectors of Information for Development namely SDI, Statistics and Library, and incorporate them as a full component of the national development plans and poverty reduction strategy papers;
- b. for countries that have already started or finalized their NICI and SDI process, to take necessary actions for their full integration;
- c. to transform the NICI Plan into a national Orientation Law focused on preparation of building the Information Society;
- d. to earmark adequate budgetary resources for the goals established in the NICI, through a Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF); and to fix in this MTEF Framework a percentage of the national budget that can be targeted to the promotion of the Information society and prepare in this regard a special report, annexed to the budget, detailing clearly the national effort;
- e. to incorporate the *information dimension* into every new public policy document or reform;
- f. to give to the private sector and businesses (including the SME and SMI and the rural sector) the necessary incentives and facilities to encourage them to use information tools and make the related adjustments in their strategy and structure, in order to increase their competitiveness, domestic and global market access and opportunities of wealth creation;
- g. to remodel the national regulatory policies in the economic sphere in order to minimize information asymmetries in the economy and make market functioning more effective;
- h. to include transparency of public information as a basic rule in their Fundamental Laws;

- i. to continue to actively participate, in coordination with the other African Nations, in the discussions regarding the GATS and the TRIPS, with the aim to improve the African positions in this regard;
- j. to present each year a report-assessment on the preparation towards the Information Society that will be discussed at the Parliament and in all segments of the society;
- k. to set up CODI national Committees in order to monitor the CODI meetings recommendations.

#### **To ECA:**

- a. to continue to actively support the Members States in the design and the implementation their NICI plans and strategies, taking into account the integrated approach for the various information components;
- b. to set up a CODI integrated Document including all CODI previous sessions recommendations and resolutions, and elaborate a CODI action Plan to be continuously updated;
- c. to set up a mechanism in order to monitor and evaluate the impact of CODI related activities;

#### **To International Partners:**

- a. to support the implementation by the Members States of the recommendations identified above;
- b. to make information and ICT promotion key component of their development assistance to African Countries as means for poverty reduction and growth acceleration.

## **II. WORLD SUMMIT ON INFORMATION SOCIETY**

### **The CODI,**

Taking into consideration the recommendations of CODI III regarding the presentation, by the Bamako Bureau of a common Platform in the WSIS preparatory process;

Considering the decisions of the WSIS and the need for Africa's participation in the implementation of the Geneva 2003 and Tunis 2005 recommendations;

Noting the current status of the international preparatory process of WSIS Second Phase, in which the international Community supported the African initiative of establishing the Digital Solidarity Fund and encouraged the use of existing financing mechanisms;

Further considering the interest expressed by the participants to the different CODI Sub Committees for the coming Second Phase of the WSIS Tunis 2005;

Noting the necessary involvement of the African Stakeholders (Governments, International Organisations, Civil Society and Private Sector) in the preparatory process of the Second phase of WSIS;

Invites the Member States to participate at the highest level to the Second Phase of the WSIS Tunis 2005;

**Recommends:**

- a. that all African Stakeholders continue their active participation to the international preparatory process of the Second Phase of WSIS;
- b. that the Bamako Bureau continues its coordination action in the Preparation of the Second Phase of WSIS, in conformity with its mandate;

**Recommends to ECA:**

- a. to continue providing appropriate support to the Bamako Bureau in fulfilling its mandate;
- b. to pursue its coordination efforts with other Regional UN Economic Commissions, in the Framework of WSIS;
- c. to support Tunisia in its efforts to organise the Second Phase of WSIS in November 2005 and to actively contribute to its success;

**Recommends** that CODI undertakes appropriate measures in order to implement WSIS Second Phase decisions as well as the different aspects of the African Action Plan, in order to contribute to building the information and knowledge society.

### **III. INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)**

#### **1. Creating an enabling environment for the development of the E-economy**

Considering that :

- a. Information is the strategic economic resource in the emerging e-economy and the knowledge industries are driving much of recent economic growth;
- b. Information and knowledge industries could offer major opportunities for the African economic growth; and
- c. Policy frameworks and legal instruments play a crucial role in promoting the development of new economy and facilitating Africa's participation in the global networked economy.

Noting that the growth of Africa's mobile markets outpaces the rest of the world,

**CODI recommends** Member States to:

- a. Scale up investments in infrastructure development and e-commerce initiatives
- b. Put in place a balanced regulatory framework to encourage the private sector to drive the growth in the e-economy
- c. Encourage more participatory policy processes involving all stakeholders
- d. Involve new and traditional media to reach the public
- e. Ensure policy consistency, continuity and implementation with appropriate financial mechanisms
- f. Promote research and development (R&D) as a new mode of wealth creation and take appropriate measures to facilitate ICT industrialization, including development of hardware
- g. Harness creative and innovative technologies and business models, such as Voice over IP (VoIP), ICT-enabled export services and mobile commerce, to enhance competitiveness of Africa's private sector and meet the needs of the public



- h. Proactively attract foreign knowledge and ICT businesses through FDI, co-investment and joint ventures
- i. Increase efforts to develop and expand infrastructure as a foundation of the e-economy, while reducing telecommunication tariffs
- j. Support training institutions and centers of excellence to produce the critical mass of the required ICT skilled human resources
- k. Support the creation and growth of indigenous knowledge and ICT based large businesses and small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) through adequate financing mechanisms and capacity building programmes and services
- l. Encourage the procurements of ICT products and services of African ICT companies to incubate talent and expand skill transfer
- m. Set up a national committee to address Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) issues in the context of e-strategies
- n. Review the formulation and enforcement of cyber laws and build capacity of law enforcement personnel in tackling cyber crimes in accordance with the basic human rights
- o. Take into consideration the need for enhancing content creation
- p. Ensure that the WSIS Plans of Action and the Accra Commitments are implemented
- q. Establish regulatory mechanisms with regard to media and multi-media content
- r. Endeavor to formulate and implement e-strategies with strong linkages with MDGs and PRSPs
- s. Allocate a percentage of the national budget to ICT activities in various ministries, departments and agencies.

#### **CODI recommends ECA to**

- a. Assist member States to raise awareness on challenges and opportunities of e-commerce
- b. Increase assistance to member States and Regional Economic Communities (RECs) in the harmonization of policies and regulations with a view to developing sub-regional and regional markets, attracting foreign direct investments (FDI) and promoting regional integration
- c. Support the implementation of initiatives to enhance capacity of member States in the area of monitoring and evaluating progress made through Information Society indicators
- d. Scale up its support to member States in the area of institutional and individual capacity building in the formulation and development of e-strategies as a vehicle to create an enabling environment
- e. Support member States to set up a mechanism at the national, regional and international levels to implement and evaluate the activities and initiatives derived from the WSIS Plans of Action and the Accra Commitments
- f. Undertake a study on financing mechanisms for ICT businesses and initiatives
- g. Strengthen and harmonize the existing sub-regional and regional regulatory activities in cooperation with the African Telecommunications Union (ATU) and the International Telecommunications Union (ITU)
- h. Encourage South-South cooperation, especially within Africa.

### **3. Mobilizing stakeholders and partners**

Highlighting the importance of multi-stakeholder partnerships and establishment of an inclusive Information Society

#### **CODI recommends member States to**

- a. Encourage the participation of women and disadvantaged entrepreneurs in the e-commerce by supporting initiatives, such as the Enterprise Development Facility (EDF) and implement initiatives specifically targeting at addressing gender imbalance;





- b. Put in place a mechanism to address issues, such as security, privacy, confidence, consumer trust and fiscal matters;
- c. Initiate and implement concrete Public-Private Partnership (PPP) and multi-stakeholder initiatives;
- d. Encourage capacity building of civil society at the national and grassroots levels;
- e. Encourage the active participation of youth in the Information Society processes and support capacity building for youth at the national level;

**CODI recommends ECA to**

- a. Support capacity building and training of various stakeholders, such as media, public sector, private sector, academia, civil society, parliamentarians, youth and the disabled on the use of ICT to facilitate their participation in the E-economy
- b. Assist member States to mainstream gender in e-strategies and e-commerce policies, legislations and regulations and to expedite the gender balanced participation in the e-economy
- c. Assist Civil Society in contributing in building the information society by:
  - i) Establishing the network of African parliamentarians so as to enhance information exchange and enable them to play a key role in the development of African Information Society;
  - ii) Supporting the African Youth ICT4D Network (AYIN) in the implementation of its Africa Plan towards the realization of Africa's Information Society agenda.

**CODI recommends AU/NEPAD and the international community to**

- Support member States in the implementation of ICT initiatives in support of the MDGs, PRSPs and international competitiveness, taking into consideration national policies and specificities.

**4. Support to Free and Open Source Software (FOSS)**

Recognizing the potentials of FOSS as an emerging industry, employment creator and driving force of ICT development and the e-economy,

**CODI recommends member States to**

- a. Consider FOSS as a strategic option to strengthen the provision of cost-effective, easily adaptable and modifiable services to the citizens
- b. Raise awareness and build capacity on information security issues and concerns
- c. Take into account FOSS in the formulation and implementation of ICT industrialization initiatives
- d. Introduce training programmes in the use of FOSS
- e. Encourage participation of FOSS communities in the NICI formulation and implementation processes
- f. Ensure Open standards and interoperability of computer operating systems which have now been considered as part of infrastructure

**CODI recommends ECA to**

Support member States to develop capacity in FOSS.



#### **IV. LIBRARIES AND INFORMATION SERVICES**

**Recognizing** the importance and contributions of knowledge, libraries, archives, documentation centers, and information services in economic and human development, including in achieving the objectives of the Millennium Development Goals and African Information Society Initiatives and the Action Plan of the World Summit on the Information Society.

##### **CODI recommends to ECA to:**

- a. Review the objectives and strategies of the African Information Society Initiative (AISII) to elaborate the role and use of libraries, archives, documentation centres and other information services in African development strategies.
- b. Establish a policy framework to include libraries and knowledge creation and management in the National Information and Communication Infrastructure (NICI) plan.
- c. Create performance indicators for the proposed Knowledge, Libraries and Information for Development Subcommittee.
- d. Advocate and promote free and equal access to information.
- e. Advocate for the introduction and promotion of knowledge management in member countries.
- f. Play a pivotal role in promoting dissemination of knowledge and enhance its involvement in e-government initiatives in Africa.
- g. Play a pivotal role in promoting development communication, including developing community information resource centres.
- h. Focus on content in all its forms, including oral and indigenous knowledge.
- i. Encourage integration between ICT, libraries and other information services.
- j. Form partnerships among information providers, industry and government.
- k. Target well-identified projects which it supports for the strengthening of capacity.
- l. Include National library associations as well as library schools and other similar professional bodies in its partnership arrangements.
- m. Support the development of digital and virtual libraries through projects such as the African Virtual Library and Information Network (AVLIN).

##### **CODI recommends further to Member States to:**

- a. Develop national knowledge systems (involving national libraries, national archives and information, documentation centres, research councils, etc.) as broad-based frameworks to actively



pursue an integrated knowledge and information strategy to carry out Information Society schemes, as well as economic and human development, including meeting Millennium Development Goals.

- b. Adopt a holistic framework in developing national information policies to ensure completeness of their Information Society strategies, and to use broad-based implementation strategies in driving the national Information Society agenda.
- c. Provide resources for the establishment of hybrid libraries in line with the goals set out in the WSIS Plan of Action.
- d. Ensure that libraries and information centres are adequately provided for in national and sub-national budgets.
- e. Recognize the current transition to an Information Society and develop mechanisms to ensure the adequate transformation.

## **V. STATISTICS**

Recalling the resolutions made during CODI II and CODI III;

Noting the country reports presented to CODI IV by: Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mauritania, Mauritius, Morocco, Niger, Sierra Leone and Tunisia;

Having examined the reports on (i) the first and second meetings of the Advisory Board on Statistics in Africa (ABSA), (ii) the FASDEV meeting, (iii) the assessment of the implementation of the 1993 System of National Accounts (SNA) in the region, and (iv) ECA statistical database development;

Bearing in mind the role of sub-regional institutions such as AFRISTAT, COMESA, EAC, ECOWAS, SADC, WAEMU, WAMI, etc., in the development of statistics in Africa;

Aware of the progress made by a number of countries in preparing strategic plans for statistics, and that many National Statistical Offices (NSOs) are constrained in their operations due to the traditional civil service practices;

Highly aware of the importance of the 2010 Round of Population and Housing Censuses programme and the urgent need of data for monitoring the MDGs, PRSPs, NEPAD and the APRM;

Appreciative of the important role of technical partners in promoting the use of statistics at the sub-national, national, sub-regional and regional levels with advocacy tools;

Recognizing the various initiatives undertaken by National Statistical Offices in data collection;

Noting the slow pace of adapting new statistical methodologies and the deficit in number of statisticians;

Noting also that the lack of ownership, inadequacy of financial resources, lack of institutional and human capacity continues to impede statistical development in Africa;

Recognizing further the significant advancements in the information and communication technologies and the need to increase their use in statistical operations;

