



Distribution: General

E/ECA/CODIST/1/4

**UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL**

Original: English

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

First Session of the Committee on
Development Information, Science and Technology (CODIST-I)

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
28 April – 01 May 2009

**ECA's activities in Information and Communication Technologies
for Development in 2008-2009, highlights on the implementation of
CODI V recommendations and the work programme for 2010-2011**

I. Introduction

1. This report covers the activities undertaken since last CODI V which reviewed the 2007-2008 work programme with highlights on the follow up of CODI V recommendations. The areas included in the report are developing national, sectoral and regional Information and Communication Infrastructure Policies and Plans; developing Information Society indicators; capacity building for Information Society Stakeholders, outreach and communication, as well as partnership and networking.

II. Developing National Information and Communication Infrastructure (NICI) Policies and Plans

2. A key component in implementing the Africa Information Society Initiative (AISII), adopted by the Conference of African Ministers in May 1996, has been the development of national e-strategies, or the National Information and Communication Infrastructure (NICI) plans. Even though the country NICI development pillars were varied, the strategies focused on the following four major themes:
 - a) An appropriate digital infrastructure to contribute to achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the Poverty Reduction Strategies (PRSs);
 - b) Building human resource capacity through training and education;
 - c) Promoting the emergence of a strong national ICT sector through private sector development; and
 - d) Creating adequate institutional and legal frameworks for the development of the Information Society.
3. The following provides the status of NICI development since CODI V held in April 2007:
4. Under the cooperation agreement between ECA, Finland and Industry Canada through the ePolicy Resource Network (ePolNet Africa), a number of African countries received support to develop, implement and monitor their sectoral, national and regional e-strategies in 2007-2008. During 2007-2008, ECA assisted member States by improving their capacities to formulate, implement, coordinate and evaluate information for development policies and strategies. As a result of ECA's technical assistance, 10 countries were able to initiate and/or continue consolidating their national ICT policy processes (Cameroon, Chad, DRC, Liberia, Malawi, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda-2nd NICI plan, Sierra Leone and Togo), 3 countries (Burundi, Gambia and Swaziland) finalized and adopted the policy process and had now embarked on implementing their ICT plans. Evidence shows that the number of countries which embarked in the formulation and implementation of ICT policies had increased by 11 during the period. Efforts were also made to sensitize countries on the importance of gender in the NICI policy process (Togo and Chad). The success was therefore evident in that the number of countries with ICT policies increased from 13 in 2000 to 35 in 2008. Additionally, through the cooperation between ECA and the Government of Finland in 2007, support and technical advisory services were provided to Rwanda and Kenya in the area of

telecommunications regulation. In addition a telecommunications convergence study was commissioned in Nigeria and Sierra Leone - an activity supported by a Finnish telecom regulation expert, who worked with ECA in advising NICI countries on telecommunications regulation activities.

5. To support the NICI development process and address the ICT infrastructure challenge in Africa, ECA was one of the organizers of the Connect Africa Summit held on 29 and 30 October 2007 in Kigali, Rwanda, which culminated with the adoption of five goals to bridge the digital divide in Africa. To help achieve these goals, many participants announced major commitments, totaling approximately US\$55 billion. During the two-day Summit, delegates participated in a series of interactive sessions, debating on issues related to the themes of broadband ICT networks, rural connectivity, capacity building, applications and services, and the enabling environment. ECA in cooperation with the Canadian e-Policy Resource Centre (CePRC) and in partnership with the African Union, the Internet Society, ICANN and the Open Society Initiatives for Southern Africa, organized two pre-Summit parallel workshops respectively on "Regulation and Public Access" and "Internet Governance" on 24-25 October attended by over 100 policymakers and stakeholders from member States.
6. Below are highlights from NICI related activities at country-level:

Chad

7. The policy was adopted by government in June 2007 with the following policy pillars: Infrastructure development; ICTs and Poverty Reduction; Legal and regulatory Framework; Content development; Capacity building; E-governance; and ICTs and vulnerable groups.

Congo

8. Following the adoption of their national ICT Policy, ECA in cooperation with its sub-regional office for Central Africa supported the roll out of a youth e-employment project in Brazzaville for 12 months commencing in June 2007 in collaboration with UNDP and the Ministry of Works of Congo. In line with this, several multimedia centers were opened in 2008 to provide the youth with ICT training and online search for employment opportunities.

Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)

9. The ECA supported-ICT policy development process has faced undue delays due to the complexity of the administrative arrangements and the various changes in the political landscape. Efforts are underway towards the adoption of the draft policy document by 2009.

Gambia

10. The Government of the Gambia, in response to the recognition that ICTs played a pivotal role in the development process, formulated the nation's ICT4D (NICI) Policy with technical support from ECA and the Government of Finland (The Executive Summary is available at: <http://www.uneca.org/aisi/docs/GambiaNICI-Summary.pdf>). In developing this Policy Statement, the government recognized that: for these policy provisions and commitments to make an appreciable desirable impact on Gambia's socio-economic development process, they would need to be integrated into the overall developmental objectives, priorities and programmes of the country. Such an all-inclusive comprehensive ICT4D policy and strategies was aimed at the implementation of initiatives that would contribute to addressing the key developmental challenges facing the Gambia.

11. After the adoption of the NICI Policy adopted by the Cabinet, further support was provided in 2008 to develop a NICI Plan through a national consultative process involving all key stakeholder institutions in the public and the private sector.

Mozambique

12. ECA received a request from the Government of Mozambique to support the Ministry of Science and Technology (MCT) in the implementation of the Mozambique Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy (MOSTIS). In response to this request and in line with its work programme as well as the MoU signed between ECA and the Government of Mozambique (Cooperation and Implementation of Joint Activities and Programmes in the area of ICT, Science and Technology for Development), ISTD is providing the requested support to the Government of Mozambique through the appointment of an international consultant to advise and coordinate the Ministry on operationalization of MOSTIS. The consultant commenced the 3-month assignment in January 2009.
13. Through the ECA-Finland Cooperation programme, ECA has been providing support to a number of member States, especially focusing on national ICT strategies. Mozambique has integrated ICTs in the overall national Science, Technology and Innovation strategy. The MCT planned to implement MOSTIS which was approved by the Council of Ministers during the 15th Ordinary session of June 27, 2006. The operationalization of MOSTIS will involve four different groups of activities, which are: a) implementation programming; b) budgeting; c) development and application of a methodology for the science, technology and innovation project formulation for financing; and d) establishment of the mobilization and application of resources systems and of the MOSTIS implementation and management.

Nigeria

14. Following consultations between ECA and the Government, a Nigerian National Strategic Action Plan committee was established. It is mandated by the Federal Government to develop an e-strategy action plan and programs in line with the national development objectives and priorities. The Committee was composed of representatives of all the development sectors in Nigeria. The Plan was designed to contribute to the realization of the stated socio-economic development policy priorities and Government programmes. The ICT4D Plan-2010 was organized in terms of a number of broad policy focus area sub-plans. Several subcommittees were created to work on various sub-plans.
15. The final Nigeria NICI plan, integrating all the eleven sub-plans was submitted to ECA in December 2008 and a brief description is available at: <http://www.uneca.org/aisi/docs/NigeriaNICI-Summary.pdf>
16. The implementation of the programmes of the sub-plans is expected to be undertaken by a number of implementation agencies at the federal and the state level. Ownership of the implementation of the Plan would be at the Implementation Agency level and the National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA) would play a plan implementation and coordination role as opposed to being the sole institution for implementing the Plan.

Sierra Leone

17. ECA's ICT, Science and Technology Division (ISTD) supported Sierra Leone in developing the NICI policy as the guiding framework for ICT programme planning, project development and implementation. The NICI process in Sierra Leone was initiated by the Ministry of

Development and Economic Planning (MODEP) following their request to the ECA for support and technical assistance. To supervise the process, a high level technical committee (National Core Group) incorporating representatives from all the stakeholders was constituted by the MODEP.

18. To ensure an integrated approach in the development of national e-strategies, a new initiative was launched for member States to develop integrated NICI/Spatial Data Infrastructure (SDI) policies, as several NICI process building blocks would require geoinformation support for effectiveness and efficiency. This was in response to recommendations from the Fourth Meeting of the Committee on Development Information (CODI IV)¹.
19. Sierra Leone was identified as one of the countries to benefit from this programme at a joint NICI/SDI experts group workshop held in November 2006. In November 2007, the Sierra Leone NICI was enhanced to include the Geoinformation Science sector, resulting in a “Geo-enabled NICI Policy and Plans”. Since November 2007, the process has not registered much progress, due to the creation of new portfolios after a change in government in September 2007.
20. In January 2008, the Ministry of Lands, Country Planning and Environment (MoLCPE), towards the fulfillment of their National Lands Policy, requested ECA's technical assistance in geoinformation and mapping to begin to recreate the spatial data infrastructure of Sierra Leone with a focus, in the first instance, to support infrastructure redevelopment. This was intended to address the country's physical, institutional and information infrastructure destroyed in the decade-plus civil war. As a follow-up, ECA's support to the Government of Sierra Leone in this regard commenced in September 2008 and this work is currently in progress.

III. Developing Sectoral Information and Communication Infrastructure (SICI) Policies and Plans

21. With regard to developing sectoral policies, a number of activities were undertaken since CODI V.

Benin

22. ECA provided advisory services to Benin in developing a sectoral e-education plan implementation strategy and plan. The main objective of the strategy was to facilitate provision of education and teaching at all levels and content development, with capacity building to guide Benin through the Knowledge Economy. The strategy was submitted to the various ministries in charge of education for its validation and implementation in the due course in December 2008.

Burkina Faso

23. Burkina Faso, with the assistance of the ECA and the Canadian International Development Research Centre (IDRC), was one of the first African countries to have completed a NICI plan in 2000. The NICI Plan was further updated and aligned to the country's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) with financial support of the World Bank and UNDP in 2004. The plan framework encompassed several activities including the development of

¹ Fourth Meeting of the Committee on Development Information (CODI IV), April 2005

sectoral strategies. It is in this context that Burkina Faso has as a follow-up, requested assistance from ECA to support the implementation of sectoral activities.

24. Based on the national ICT Policy and e-strategy, the over-arching goal of this activity, supported by the Government of Finland was the elaboration and subsequent activation of five sectoral e-strategies aimed at the modernization of business practices, increased productivity, improved transparency and good governance, better education and improvement of service delivery to citizens, especially in rural areas. The sectors identified for development of sectoral e-strategies were E-Government; E-Education; E-Health; E-Services for Rural Development; and E-Commerce. Due to changes in the ministry and staff-turnover, the remaining activities were postponed to 2009.

Mali

25. In December 2008, Mali adopted sectoral strategies on health, education and e-government. The e-Government Strategy has the following pillars: Regulation and enabling environment; Government commitment; Resources; Internal procedures and Conformity to sub-regional and regional environment. The e-Education Strategy pillars are: Enabling environment; Infrastructure and equipment; Applications and usage; and Human resource development. The e-Health Strategy pillars are: Infrastructure and equipment; Content and applications; and Human resource development.

Niger

26. Niger adopted an e-government strategy in 2008 - one of the six pillars of the NICI Plan. The strategy was aimed at facilitating procedures and exchange of information within central and local government as well as between government and users by enabling the latter to access public services without distance limitations. The strategy pillars are: Infrastructure and equipment; Applications and content; and Standards and innovation and Capacity building.
27. Within the framework of the Global ePolicy Resource Network (ePol-Net), ECA in cooperation with the Mozambican Ministry of Science and Technology, the Canadian ePolicy Resource Centre (CePRC) and the Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa (OSISA) organized a workshop on ICTs, Gender and e-Government in Maputo, Mozambique from 28 – 30 May 2007. The main objective of the workshop was to encourage dialogue among ICT and gender experts in countries with the aim of analyzing and evaluating the efforts put in place by African countries to include a gender dimension in e-Government policies and programmes that address the specific needs of African women. The outcome of the workshop was a framework for an African Action Plan for ICTs, Gender and e-Government.
28. Furthermore, through the ePol-NET programme, ECA also undertook a unique 6-country study on ICTs, Trade and Economic Growth in Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Senegal and South Africa with the aim of building African capability and capacity in creating policy frameworks to create the pre-conditions for use and adoption of ICTs in trade. The results and outcomes were synthesized and a consolidated report developed to feed into national ICT policy development processes.
29. ECA with support from the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and in cooperation with the World Health Organization (WHO) commissioned 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 was 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; availing epidemiological surveillance information for analysis and use as soon as it was collected; and support data and knowledge mining. In order to review the data requirements of the study, ECA and WHO organised needs assessment studies in Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique, Rwanda, Swaziland, Tanzania and Uganda.

IV. Developing Regional Information and Communication Infrastructure (RICI) Policies and Plans

CODI V recommendation:

- *ECA should organize follow-up meetings with Regional Economic Communities to develop sub-regional CODIS work programmes in coordination with national CODIST groups;*
- *ECA should provide technical and financial support to RECs to enable them harmonize ICT policies and strategies at sub-regional level to enhance regional integration;*
- *ECA should identify African related regional initiatives in relation to promotion of employment in the field of ICTs*

30. With respect to RICIs or regional e-Strategies aimed at developing and harmonizing strategies among Regional Economic Communities (RECs), ECA and its partners, namely, Finland and Industry Canada provided support to COMESA, ECOWAS, EAC, and CEMAC. ICT experts from the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) adopted new guidelines on combating cyber crime in the sub-region, following a workshop that concluded on 11 December 2007 in Lome, Togo. As a result of this process, Ministers in charge of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) from West Africa adopted on 16th October 2008 in Praia, Cape Verde, important legal texts on cyber crime and personal data protection in ECOWAS Member States.
31. In addition to those two texts, the ministers adopted a legislative Act on e-commerce in the ECOWAS space and an Act on a model ICT framework. The Acts aimed at modernizing the instruments for promoting e-commerce, preserving personal data and curbing cyber crime through the necessary sub-regional and national legislation. While adopting the texts, the ministers appealed to ECA and the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) to provide support to member States to translate the regional acts into national laws and to establish national cyber crime surveillance centres.
32. ECA commissioned a consultant to work in Burkina Faso, Ghana, Kenya and Mozambique to develop national cyber security frameworks within the framework of the Global ePolicy Resource Network (ePol-NET). The consultant would assist the countries in proposing appropriate cyber security framework after reviewing current policy regimes.
33. ECA is supporting the Communauté Economique des Etats d'Afrique Centrale (CEEAC) and Central African Monetary and Economic Community (CEMAC) to develop an ICT Strategy for Central Africa. The document discussed in a workshop in Douala (Cameroon) from 24-25 January 2007, extends the eCEMAC 2010 to all CEEAC countries and forms the framework for the implementation of the Information Society in the sub-region.
34. In North Africa, a study was undertaken in collaboration with the Union du Maghreb Arabe (UMA) on the status of e-commerce development in the sub-region to examine the feasibility

of launching of a sub-regional e-commerce platform, which would facilitate e-commerce activities among Member states. The process was started with an ECA/ICTDAR/UMA joint workshop on the ICT for developing the exchanges between the UMA countries, followed by constituting a team of consultants in Egypt, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia to undertake the study of the sub-regional platform. The final document was submitted to UMA for adoption.

V. Developing Information Society indicators

35. ECA has been involved in the identification, development and collection of ICT4D indicators to harness the development of measuring the Information Society in Africa through an initiative called Scan-ICT, a project that started in 2001. The first phase of the project, involving six pilot countries ended in 2004. Scan-ICT Phase II was launched in July 2005 in five countries: Cameroon, Gambia, Ghana, Mauritius and Rwanda. Each of the countries identified the core ICT4D indicators and the methodology and made the institutional arrangements necessary for leading the process through stakeholder involvement with National Statistical Offices (NSOs) taking the lead in the process. In 2007, Gambia, Ghana, and Mauritius completed the project and submitted the final report with a website on the findings, while Rwanda finalised the activity in 2008. The full report at: http://www.uneca.org/aisi/docs/RWANDA_SCAN_ICT_REPORT.pdf. Cameroon completed the project in 2006. In its Scan-ICT Phase II project, ECA developed a comprehensive framework for the development of Information Society status and impact monitoring, assessment and measurement indicators. The toolkit was built on the details of the methodology developed as part of the Scan-ICT Phase I pilot project and incorporates within its scope, a framework for the development of suitable indicators for assessing the status of the development, deployment and the use of ICTs in African countries and facilitating the process of guiding the NICI policy and plan development process as well as monitoring of NICI implementation.
36. At the international level, ECA and its sister UN Regional Commissions and organizations, such as UNCTAD, OECD, ITU, UNESCO, UNDP, World Bank, EuroStat are actively participating in the Partnership for Measuring ICT for Development established in June 2004. In the Partnership, ECA is leading the Task Group on e-Government indicators and participating in other task groups on ICT4D indicators, capacity-building and database development.
37. In order to review progress made with regard to the implementation of Scan-ICT Phase II as well as to review the status of ICT measurement in Africa, ECA and its partners organized a regional workshop held in March 2007 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The workshop built on the work by the Partnership on Measuring ICT for Development and Scan-ICT and was aimed at advancing the availability of comparable data on ICT in the region. The workshop allowed representatives of NSOs, as well as representatives of ministries and regulatory agencies - producers and/or users of ICT statistics - to discuss the need for comparable data on Information Society developments and share best practices in ICT measurement at the regional level. This has helped countries in the region develop comparable ICT statistics and indicators for effective ICT policy making, through networks and statistical tools.

VI. Building ICT Research and Innovation Capacity in Africa

38. With support from the Government of Finland, two of the four Academic Research Networks (ARN) research activities were implemented in 2007-2008. These were on: 1) Information Society Indicators for Tunisia; and 2) Promotion of Local Languages in Cameroon.
39. With regard to the first activity, the ARN group on Indicators, coordinated by Tunisia builds on the good practices and lessons learned from the first phase of the research activity. Research has been undertaken with special focus on ICT socio-economic impact core list of indicators that could help to assess the links between investment in ICT, poverty reduction and attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). A review workshop was organized in collaboration with the Government of Tunisia, from 5 to 6 April 2007, to share with statistics experts the identified core list of Information Society indicators to measure and benchmark the socio-economic of ICT suggested by the ARN. The workshop brought together more than hundred (100) senior officials of the administration and also practitioners, statistics experts and researchers from Tunisia, Mauritania, Morocco, France and Canada, as well as from the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). The meeting increased participants' understanding on the challenges of measuring the socio-economic impact of the Information Society.
40. The second ARN research activity undertaken in 2007-2008 focus on the "development of a Rural Electronic Schools Model in African Languages (ERELA) in Obout and Metsah Villages, Cameroon". The ARN group working on promoting African language and local content in the cyberspace, started the implementation of its research outputs in two primary schools in Cameroon villages: Obout and Metsa under initiative called: "Generalizable Model for Rural Electronic Schools in African Languages (ERELA). ERELA is built on "Operational Research Program for Language Education in Cameroon/Programme Opérationnel d'Enseignement des Langues au Cameroun (PROPELCA)", spearheaded by the National Association of Cameroonian Language Committees (NACALCO) aimed at teaching and learning Cameroon local languages in primary and secondary schools program.

VII. Capacity-building on Information Society

41. With support from the Government of Japan, ECA continued in 2007-2008 supporting member States in capacity building on Information Society issues through its Information Technology Centre for Africa (ITCA).
42. ITCA's African eLearning Initiative, an extension of its on-site capacity building activity for African policy makers and other stakeholders in Information Society issues in general and ICT policy making in particular, has started offering courses. In collaboration with the Diplo Foundation of Malta, an online course on Internet Governance is available through the African eLearning Initiative. CePRC of Canada has also supported ECA in sharing experiences and expertise on developing online training modules. As a result, other online courses will soon be available on areas such as ICT policies. A week long e-learning capacity building workshop was conducted at the ITCA from August 13 – 17, 2007. The workshop was aimed at developing the capacity of ISTD staff engaged on the development and maintenance of an online learning system. More: <http://www.epolafrica.org/elearnafrica/>
43. ITCA is also involved in a series of capacity building activities in a wide range of topics from basic ICT skills to ICT policy training both on-site at ITCA and online through its African e-learning Initiative. To this end, a five day long capacity building training for fifteen Ethiopian women media professionals was conducted at the ITCA from August 27 –

- 31, 2007. The training, supported by the Africa Node of the Global ePolicy Resource Network (ePol-NET) and the Government of Japan, included discussions on Internet services and tools used for searching the Internet for different types of content (text, audio, picture and video), familiarizing participants with advanced search techniques and features, an extensive hands-on training on web page development and blogging.
44. In addition, a series of capacity building activities to build the capacity of the staff of the Ethiopian Customs Authority was delivered to 41 participants from 20 September to 29 November 2007. The training was part of ECA's support to the Government of Ethiopia to effectively implement and maintain an UNCTAD-created Automated System for Customs Data (ASYCUDA) which handles manifests, customs declarations, accounting and transit and suspense procedures and also generates trade data for statistical economic analysis. In addition, it provides Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) between traders and customs. The current courses are designed to raise the capacity of the Ethiopian Customs Authority staff on the design, development and implementation of a system that would allow users to interface the existing ASYCUDA system through the Internet.
45. ITCA also uses exhibition events to interact and attract visitors. These exhibits provide information on key activities that may result in ECA's partnership with the various stakeholders. Details of the exhibitions are described under the "Outreach and Communications" section of the document.

VIII. Stakeholders' consultations

CODI V recommendation:

- ***ECA should document and showcase ICT best practices at the regional, sub-regional and national levels to enhance knowledge sharing and avoid duplication of efforts***

46. As part of its commitment to creating and managing knowledge at the continental level, ECA has been facilitating the activities aimed at building the capacities of stakeholders groups for the implementation of AISI, including the participation in policy formulation, analysis, consensus building, workshop, forums, research and access to information and knowledge resources. As a result, more than five hundred ICT4D actors or network coordinators have benefited from the capacity building activities.
47. Some of the major stakeholders' consultations organised with support from partners such as the Government of Finland, Industry Canada, SDC, and IDRC are highlighted below:

The Gambia

48. A workshop held in Banjul on 24-25 August 2008 brought together experts from various stakeholder groups, comprised of government ministries, private sector, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), community-based organisations (CBOs), academia and media to review and endorse "The Gambian ICT4D-2012 Plan". The document is the product of a series of activities which started in 2003, based on ECA's African Information Society Initiative (AISII) which led to the adoption of the Gambia National Information and Communication Infrastructure (NICI) Policy by Cabinet in 2006.

Nigeria

49. Following a workshop held in Lagos on 17 January 2008, over 100 experts from various stakeholder groups endorsed Nigeria's Information and Communication Technology for

Development (ICTD) Plan. This was as a result of a series of activities started in January 2006 following a 2005 Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the ECA and the Ministry of Science and Technology of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, in the framework of the AISI.

50. The work was coordinated by the NITDA, which established the National Strategic Action Plan Committee mandated by the Federal Government to draw up an e-strategy action plan and programmes in line with the national development objectives and priorities of the country, especially the “Vision 20-20-20 aimed at positioning Nigeria amongst the 20 leading economies in the world by year 2020”.

SADC Parliamentarian Forum, 8 – 10 April 2008, Johannesburg, South Africa

51. ECA provided support for the organization of a sub-regional workshop on the “Validation of the SADC-Parliamentary Forum ICT Strategy” which was held from 8 – 10 April 2008 in Johannesburg, South Africa. The workshop brought together over 20 participants from 13 countries (Angola, Botswana, Congo DR, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe) the SADC-PF, SADC Secretariat and ECA. The workshop culminated in the adoption of an ICT strategy for Parliaments; formulation of a time bound Action Plan to operationalise the strategy; increasing the awareness of MPs on ICTs capabilities; and establishing a SADC MPs Network within the context of the Information Society.

2nd ICT Best Practices Forum, 21 – 23 April 2008, Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso

55. ECA participated in the second ICT Best Practices Forum held from 21 – 23 April 2008 in Ouagadougou, Burkina-Faso. Over 500 delegates from attended the Forum. The second Regional ICT Best Practices Forum served as a practical way for high-level officials from the different regions in Africa to share specific experiences and demonstrate practical examples on successful technology solutions in their respective countries. The Forum also allowed for such solutions to be more easily replicated (particularly given the skills shortfall in the region) and encouraged an increase in technology investment overall.

GKP Regional Coordinators Meeting

52. The 16th World Congress on Information Technology (WCIT 2008) took place from 18 – 23 May 2008 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. In conjunction with WCIT 2008, the UNDESA Global Alliance on ICT and Development (UNDESA-GAID) meeting was held from 18 – 20 May 2008. In addition, the Global Knowledge Partnership (GKP) Forum on Social Entrepreneurship was held on 21 May and the GKP Regional Coordinators meeting was held from 23-25 May 2008. ECA, being the regional node for both GKP Africa and GAID Africa, participated in these events and presented ECA’s activities in the respective areas.

COMESA FOSS workshop, 26 -28 May 2008, Tripoli, Libya

53. COMESA and FOSSFA, in collaboration with ECA organized a Workshop on Free and Open Source Software from 26th - 28th May, 2008 in Tripoli, Libya. Thirty-six (36) participants from 14 countries (Burundi, Comoro, DRC, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Rwanda, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe) and representatives from regional and international organizations attended the workshop. As a result, the Free Software and Open Source Foundation for Africa (FOSSFA) was engaged on a strategic framework for the implementation of Free and Open Source Software in the member States of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA)

Knowledge Networks for Disadvantaged Communities

54. The five regional commissions of the United Nations, including ECA, launched a project for creating knowledge networks through ICT access points for disadvantaged communities. The aim of the project was to explore ways of re-designing community ICT access points in the form of nodes of knowledge networks, while continuing to operate according to a flexible structure for supporting non-formal processes as sustainable and autonomous entities. Following the country assessments in the East African Community (EAC) comprising Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania in early 2007, ECA conducted a regional stakeholders' workshop on knowledge network strategies, mechanisms and tools in December 2007. As a result, a regional knowledge network strategy for the Africa region was developed in December 2008 and a knowledge network comprising up to ten community ICT access points (telecentres) will be piloted in Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda and launched at the end of the first quarter of 2009.

ICT Standards for African Teachers' Training Institutions (I-SAT) Validation Meeting

55. A ministerial review meeting was co-organised by ECA and the Global eSchools and Communities Initiative (GeSCI) in Accra, Ghana in May 2008. The meeting was a pre-conference event prior to the eLearning Africa 2008 Conference on the theme "ICTs for Development, Education and Training". Participants were drawn from 21 countries and international and regional organizations.

Follow-up on WSIS

CODI V recommendation:

- ***ECA should use CODIST to follow-up and evaluate implementation of the World Summit on Information Society***

56. During the WSIS process, the African continent developed and adopted the African Regional Action Plan on the Knowledge Economy (ARAPKE). ECA's efforts to implement WSIS recommendations and decisions are being carried out at sub-regional level in collaboration with ECA-SROs at the RECs, especially, SADC, CEMAC and ECOWAS. Furthermore, finalization of the ARAPKE development process, in cooperation with the African Union Commission constitutes one important part of the WSIS follow up in the continent. All these activities were documented and led to a publication on WSIS Follow up. The report was distributed to more than 400 CODI participants and is available in English and French at: <http://www.uneca.org/codi/codi5/content/WSISfollow-codi5-doc9.pdf> and <http://www.uneca.org/codi/codi5/content/WSISfollow-codi5-doc9-FR.pdf>

57. In addition, ECA conducted a questionnaire-administered survey circulated to NICI focal points in the 53 member States to assess WSIS outcome implementation status. Eighteen member States (Benin, Cote d'Ivoire, DRC, Egypt, Ethiopia, the Gambia, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Madagascar, Mali, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sudan, Togo and Uganda) and one REC (COMESA) responded. The responses have formed the foundations of a WSIS monitoring database. A publication resulting from the analysis of the responses to this survey was published and would be presented at a pre-CODIST-I workshop on Tunis +3 to be held in Ethiopia in April 2009 where a follow-up mechanism and roadmap on the implementation of the WSIS action lines by 2015 would be developed.

IX. Outreach and communication

AISI Media Awards 2007

58. The 2007 edition of the AISI Media Awards ceremony took place during the Third Global Knowledge Conference (GK3), 11 – 13 December 2007 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The categories included print, radio, TV, reporting on ICT policy, ICT Research and local content applications. Over 1000 GK3 participants including the Malaysian Minister of Energy and Communication as well as the Directors of the three AISI Media Awards partners attended the Awards ceremony. Partners participating in this activity included International IDRC, IICD, SDC, and GKP. There were a total of over 125 under the eight categories. Winners and finalists were from Benin, Burkina Faso, Egypt, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mali, Nigeria, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia. See: <http://www.uneca.org/aisi/mediaaward.htm>

2007 Technology in Government in Africa (TIGA) Awards

59. The first ever Technology in Government in Africa (TIGA 2007) Awards ceremony was organized as a side event of CODI V meeting in 2007. TIGA Awards is co-organised by ECA and the Canadian e-Policy Resource Center (CePRC). Twelve innovative projects in the field of information technology were rewarded. The awards fell into four categories: public service delivery to citizens or communities; improved health services through the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT); improved educational services through the use of ICT; and Public Private Partnership in economic and financial e-services delivery. The TIGA initiative received strong backing from the Finnish and Italian governments, Ethiopian Airlines, Microsoft and the Nokia-Siemens Networks which all stressed that the continent's future lay in the development of information technology and education (http://www.uneca.org/eca_resources/news/2007/tigaawards.pdf)

Publications

CODI V recommendation:

- *ECA should review the process of undertaking the study on ICTs and employment to be multidisciplinary and include major stakeholders; Undertake an in-depth study on the role of ICTs in regional integration in Africa to supplement ECA's publication on regional integration*

60. A number of publications were produced in 2007-2008 with support from partners such as the Government of Finland, Industry Canada, and the Government of Korea. These included: 1) - ECA-ITU study report on ICT trends in national policy implementation: the impact of ICTs on Employment and Poverty Alleviation in Africa (Opportunities and Challenges); 2) African Information Society Initiative (AISII): A Decades Perspective; 3) National Information and Communication Infrastructure (NICI) good practices and lessons learned; 4) WSIS implementation guidebook; 5) A Study on private sector support investments for ICT Research and Development in Africa; and 6) Joint ECA-ITU Issues Paper on the Impact of ICTs on Employment and Poverty Reduction in Africa (Opportunities and Challenges).

Other Outreach materials

CODI V recommendations:

- *ECA should create an on-line discussion list for the ICT sub-committee to strengthen information and knowledge sharing*

61. Information for development video programme, web resources and newsletters, Internet, databases and discussion lists were produced. During the reported period, ISTD facilitated dialogue among various stakeholders on Information Society development issues (Dgroups) - over 100 new subscribers were added to the existing Dgroups with a total of over 600 members. Several exhibitions for policy-makers were organised during major meetings. Other materials included maintenance of a clearinghouse gateway at ECA for member States to search and review available data and information products.

X. Partnership and Networking

CODI V recommendation:

- *ECA should participate actively in the activities of the Global Alliance on ICT and Development (GAID), coordinate its African regional node and promote its activities in the continent taking into account the multi-stakeholder nature of GAID)*

62. Since its inception, ECA's AISI activities have been supported and implemented through a collaborative network of partners sharing the common goal of promoting connectivity and information technology development in Africa. Building and strengthening partnerships in the Information Society is therefore integral to ECA's strategic orientation.
63. Bilateral partnerships continued to be strengthened. The Second Phase of 'ECA-Finland Cooperation on ICT Development in Africa' for the period 2009 to 2011, which is a continuation of the first phase from 2004 to 2007, is now under implementation. The Programme will focus on three components: i) developing National Information and Communications Infrastructure (NICI) plans in selected countries; ii) evaluating and monitoring the ICT sector and its impact on Information Society (Scan-ICT) in selected countries; and iii) supporting ICT/STI stakeholders' capacity building. In all the three areas, apart from providing support to a few newly selected countries, the second phase will also continue support to existing Finland-supported countries on developing implementation plans and capacity building.
64. An important vehicle for AISI partnership is the Partnership for ICTs in Africa (PICTA). In 2007-2008, the joint programmes continued from previous years included the Scan-ICT project, development and implementation of national ICT strategies and publication of a monthly PICTA Bulletin. PICTA members have also jointly organized conferences and meetings to promote ICT4D in Africa.
65. The Global ePolicy Resource Network (ePoI-NET) was launched in December 2003 at the WSIS meeting held in Geneva. ECA is the African regional node of this network, ePoI-Net Africa, in collaboration with Industry Canada and CePRC. In 2007-2008, the Africa node continued to provide support to countries and RECs in addressing policy issues, regulations and strategies in such areas as e-commerce, legal and policy frameworks, telecommunications policy and regulation, Internet governance, e-government and connectivity strategies.
66. In 2007-2008, ECA continued its collaboration with the Global Knowledge Partnership (GKP) and the Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC) to serve as the African regional node

for the GKP. In line with this, ECA organized a GKP Africa GK III preparatory meeting on "Knowledge and Access", from 5-6 June 2007 during the first ICT Best Practices Forum, which was jointly organised by ECA, African Development Bank and Microsoft and held from 7-9 June 2007 in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. ECA also showcased best examples of delivering e-government services in Africa through the 12 winners of UNECA Technology in Government in Africa (TIGA) Awards 2007. ECA also participated in the second ICT Best Practices Forum held from 21 – 23 April 2008, in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso.

Apart from this, ECA, GKP, and SDC collaborated in ensuring active African participation at the GK III Conference, which took place in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, from 10 – 13 December 2007. ECA organised two Panels and participated in a number of other panels focusing on the themes of GK III: "Emerging People, Emerging Markets, and Emerging Technologies". During GK3, ECA and its partners GKP, International Development Research Center (IDRC), the International Institute for Communication and Development (IICD), and the Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation (SDC) awarded African journalists in the afore-mentioned AISI Media Awards ceremony.

67. The Global Alliance on ICT and Development (GAID) was launched following the successful convening of the second phase of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) in Tunis in 2006. In 2007-2008, ECA continued coordinating the GAID Regional African Network in order to ensure the adequate reflection of regional perspectives and needs in the activities of the Global Alliance. Collaboration among continental institutions, UN Agencies and development partners is key to harnessing the required resources, ensuring coherence and avoiding duplication of activities.
68. ECA works in partnership with the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) in a number of joint initiatives including the following:
 - ECA, UNDESA and the Parliament of Rwanda under the aegis of the Pan African Parliament are collaborating to strengthening African Parliament capacity in promoting a people-centered and equitable Information Society in Africa. This partnership started with an international conference in Kigali Rwanda from 3-5 March 2009 to provide a platform to Parliaments to dialogue on legislative and financial issues and priorities in the context of development of establishing an equitable Information Society at national and sub-regional levels.
 - Prior to the conference, ECA in collaboration with the United Nations Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development (UN-APCICT) launched the on-line platform of the *Academy of ICT Essentials for Government Leaders in Africa*. Members and ICT staff of Parliaments were introduced to the platform which consists of a core ICT4D curriculum with eight stand-alone modules ranging from basic to more advanced topics of ICT4D. Participants were also trained on Knowledge Management and the Africa Parliamentary Knowledge Network (AKPN www.apkn.org) an initiative of African Parliaments launched in June 2008.
 - ECA, UNDESA and UNPAN (UN Public Administration Network) organized a Workshop on 'Electronic/Mobile Government in Africa: Progress made and Challenges Ahead' held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 17 to 19 February, 2009 for African senior policy makers, practitioners, experts, the private sector and other stakeholders. The

workshop explored regional knowledge on issues and challenges of electronic/mobile government development in Africa and developed partnerships for capacity building in the region. The workshop concluded by identifying priority areas for Africa in order to promote e/m government which included infrastructure, capacity development, monitoring and evaluation, citizens engagement, enabling environment and funding. These would be followed-up through the UNPAN network, ECA and other partners.

69. Other partnerships included:

- Support for e-policy formulation and implementation - Government of Canada on the ePol-Net project of which ECA was the African regional node from December 2003 to March 2008;
- Partnership with UNESCO, IICBA (International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa) on the study on 'ICT Standards for African Teachers' published in June 2008.
- Partnership with ITU on the joint study on 'The Impact of ICTs on Employment and Poverty Reduction in Africa' in five countries (Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique and Nigeria), published in 2008.
- Support for outreach and building stakeholdership for the Information Society - Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC).

70. As part of its commitment to creating and managing knowledge in the continent, ECA continues to partner with African universities and research institutions as well as civil society, youth, media organizations and African Parliaments. Activities include policy analysis, consensus building and advocacy on Information Society issues.

XI. Priority areas for the work programme for 2010-2011

During 2010-2011, the objective of the sub-programme will be to strengthen and sustain an African Information Society and knowledge economy, as well as to develop capacity for the formulation, adaptation, implementation and evaluation of ICT policies and programs.

The sub-programme during the biennium will focus on supporting the formulation, implementation and evaluation of national, sub-regional and regional ICT, Science and Technology policies and strategies and integrating spatial data infrastructure and geo-information strategies into requests from member States and Regional Economic Communities (REC's). Implementation of sectoral strategies will be conducted based on national and regional priorities i.e. health, agriculture, climate change, energy, industry, government, education, trade and finance, etc. and impact assessments will entail comprehensive policy analysis, evaluation and benchmarking to monitor progress and identify gaps to be addressed to ensure a balanced and sustainable socio-economic growth in Africa.

In addition, efforts will be directed towards securing networks and infrastructure for the Knowledge Economy (e-commerce, m-commerce and e-security) and strengthening the role of entrepreneurs, startups, Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises (SMMEs). There will be continued support to ensure conducive environments through effective legal and regulatory

frameworks, e-legislation, cyber laws and enhancing the role of ICT in trade and fostering regional economic integration.

In support of this, research and development activities on selected emerging issues and topics of importance to member States will be reviewed, documented, disseminated and advocated to member States, RECs and others. Existing knowledge networks will be strengthened and new ones established to provide a forum for policy dialogue and sharing of national experiences and best practices on policies and strategies, including organizing capacity building workshops.

Through the work of the ITCA and other field projects, the sub-programme will implement exemplary databases and other information resources to demonstrate the application of the innovations and technologies to real world situations. Activities in this area will include continuation of ICT literacy enhancement programmes for various levels of policy makers (parliamentarians, women's groups, civil society organizations, etc); implementation of the African Reference Frame (AFREF); providing assistance to member States in the development of spatially enabled e-government services, through the development of online applications and streamlined electronic delivery of products and services to achieve more informed decisions in member States; development of geoinformation database for priority areas defined by regional initiatives (of the African Union, RECs, NEPAD, UNSDI and other regional organizations); increasing the capability of African countries to effectively use geospatial information, through long and short term courses, workshops, seminars, conferences, e-learning, development of training tools and materials and the continued support to existing centres of excellence and the development of new ones and techno-parks.

The sub-programme will be implemented in close collaboration with SROs and other organizations within and outside the UN system as well with other key stakeholders including civil society, private sector, women, youth organizations, media and the academia and other knowledge networks. Existing partnerships and coordination mechanisms, such as with the RECs in the respective sub-regions and other UN bodies operating at the regional and sub-regional levels will also be strengthened.

The sub-programme is expected to achieve its objectives and expected accomplishments on the assumption that:

- a) Government development policies continue to include information and communications technology, science and technology as a priority;
- b) Governments prioritize budget allocation for identified activities in IST for development;
- c) Partners continue their support in various activities; and
- d) Continued involvement of stakeholders at national, sub-regional and global levels.