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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  
Working Group on Knowledge, Libraries and  
Information Services for Development of the  
Subcommittee on Information and Communication  
Technologies**

## Working Group on Knowledge, Libraries and Information Services for Development

Chairpersons: Ms. Ellen Tise, South Africa  
Professor Kingo Mchombu, Namibia  
Rapporteur: Dr. Stephen Akintunde, Nigeria

### Following

The acceptance by the Information and Communication Technologies and Library (CODI-ICT/Library) Subcommittee meeting on Monday, 25 April 2005 for the setting up of a library working group, the group met and came up with appropriate propositions.

### Recalling

The proposal by the Secretariat that a working group be set up to consider the setting up a subcommittee on Knowledge, Libraries and Information Services for Development (CODI-KLIS).

### Having reviewed

Reports presented to CODI IV on the value and roles of knowledge, libraries and information services in the development of the Information Society in Africa and their contribution to economic and human development (E/ECA/CODI/4/7/Add.2 and E/ECA/CODI/4/50).

### Recognizing

The importance of knowledge, libraries and information services in economic and human development.

### Noting

The absence of a specific body in the current structure of CODI to review the work of ECA and advise on this area, the following recommendations were made:

- That a Subcommittee on Knowledge, Libraries and Information Services for Development (CODI-KLIS), be set up under the Committee of Development Information (CODI).
- That the appropriate amendments should be made on the Terms of Reference of the Subcommittee on CODI-ICT/Library and the Committee on Development Information.

Knowledge, Libraries and Information Services for Development (CODI-KLIS)  
Terms of Reference

**1. Major issues to be addressed:**

- a. Review progress in Member States and the region as a whole in the mandate area;
- b. Capacity building;
- c. Awareness-raising on the central place of knowledge and information in economic growth and development;
- d. Data collection, communication and utilization to illustrate current needs and policy positions;
- e. Standardization and best practices;
- f. Develop policies and projects for development of African local content;
- g. Development of national and regional policy frameworks;
- h. Stimulation of debates on policy and technical issues;
- i. Promotion of public-private partnerships;
- j. Development and facilitation of Networks; and,
- k. Review of ECA work programme in the area of KLIS.

**2. Goals**

CODI-KLIS shall:

- a. Raise awareness of the value libraries, knowledge and information in economic growth and human development;
- b. Promote the development of knowledge systems in member States;
- c. Identify and raise awareness about priority issues in information and knowledge policies and institutions;
- d. Examine and review progress made by member States;
- e. Facilitate capacity building with regard to the development of systems and services for the information society and knowledge economy;
- f. Review recent and proven technical trends and status of knowledge and information practices in the global context;
- g. Recommend strategies on the utilization of new and proven technologies and methodologies to improve data collection, processing and mode of use for decision-making;
- h. Promote the development of best practices and standards in these fields;
- i. Develop and support the establishment of national, regional and global networks and partnerships, with the aim of facilitating integration and optimizing the use of resources;
- j. Identify, promote and support regional projects;

- k. Examine and provide principals regarding ownership, access to, custodial responsibilities and commercial aspects of knowledge and information for the promotion of transparency and exchange;
- l. The subcommittee will liaise and coordinate its activities with other CODI subcommittees;
- m. Promote networking among institutions and practitioners in KLIS and generate synergy at the national level to facilitate their management and best use;
- n. Review of the ECA work programme in the area of KLIS.

### **3. Membership**

Member States will nominate representatives from national, academic, and other libraries, knowledge and information centres responsible for the promotion and strategic direction of knowledge, library and information services for development.

### **4. Observers**

Observers will include representatives of national, regional, sub-regional and international organizations. Also UN agencies, IGOs, NGOs, academia, research institutions, and private sector and the industry, including producers and users of information.

### **5. Monitoring and reporting**

Each member State shall submit a progress report of its activities to the Secretariat at least two months before the next meeting of the subcommittee.

This report was unanimously adopted at the end of the meeting.

## Enhanced role of libraries

### *Recognizing:*

The importance of knowledge, libraries and information services in economic and human development.

The important contribution of libraries and information centres in achieving the objectives of the Millennium Development Goals and World Summit on the Information Society

### *Noting:*

The absence of a specific body in the current structure of CODI to review the work of ECA and advise on this area, the following recommendations were made:

1. That a Subcommittee on Knowledge, Libraries and Information Services for Development (CODI-KLIS), be set up under the Committee of Development Information (CODI).
2. National delegations should form part of CODI-KLIS that would be responsible for formulating appropriate policies, including setting national objectives and evaluating the progress on the objectives at the national level.

### member States

- Review documents on AISI which spell out the role of libraries;
- Establish and sustain national knowledge systems (national libraries, national archives and information and documentation centres);
- Provide resources for the establishment of hybrid libraries in line with the goals set out in the WSIS Plan of Action;
- Review national budgets and advocate for libraries and information centres to be included in national budgets as knowledge centres;
- Recognize the current transition to an Information Society and develop mechanisms to ensure the adequate transformation; and,

### ECA

- Create performance indicators for the proposed Knowledge, Libraries and Information for Development Subcommittee.
- Advocate and promote free and equal access to information.

### Libraries, librarians and library associations

- Advocate for the introduction and promotion of knowledge management in member countries;
- Play a pivotal role in promoting dissemination of knowledge and enhance its involvement in e-government initiatives in Africa; and,

- Look at the broader picture in driving the national agenda and national knowledge systems.

The Subcommittee

- Focus on content in all its forms, including oral and indigenous knowledge.
- Encourage integration between ICT, libraries and other information services;
- Form partnerships among information providers, industry and government;
- Target well-identified projects which it supports for the strengthening of capacity; and,
- Include National Library Associations as well as Library schools and other professionals into its objectives.